Tanong ng Bayan/A20

One-woman policy: Uubra ba sa machong Pinoy?

WIN A 21" TV! TEXT 2910

■News/A7

Controversial general promoted after Iraq stint

■Across/A18

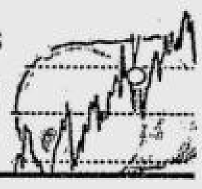
Kalinga RTC judge handling heinous crimes shot dead in Tabuk

■News/A2

Ermita, Tiglao to take turns as executive secretary, say Palace sources

■Business/B1

World oil prices hit new record: $44.99 a barrel



US tag of CPP as terrorist group bad for peace talks

By Alcuin Papa

THE UNITED STATES' renewal on Monday of an order listing the Communist Party of the Philippines as a foreign terrorist organization will have "a negative effect" on the peace talks soon to be resumed between the Philippine government and the National Democratic Front.

US/A20

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Dream come true: Cuddling Carl, Clarence 'one by one'

ALL SHE wants at this point is to cuddle her little sons "one by one."

"My dream has come true," Arlene Aguirre said yesterday at her first news conference in New York since her 2-year-old twins Carl and Clarence, born joined at the head, were surgically separated last week.

The boys survived a series of extremely del-

CUDDLING/A8

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Wednesday, August 11, 2004 ★★★ 52 pages / 4 sections / vol. 19 / no. 244 P18 website: www.inq7.net

JdV: No text message tax

Franchise tax on telecoms considered

By Cynthia D. Balana and Clarissa S. Batino

FACED with a texters' revolt, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. yesterday assured the country's 28 million mobile phone subscribers that Congress would not pass a measure imposing a tax on text messaging.

Instead, the government will impose a franchise tax on telecommunications firms as agreed upon at the meeting of the Legislative Economic Development Advisory Council (Ledac), De Venecia said after the meeting in Malacañang. A franchise tax is the government's share from telecom firms for the use of the airwaves.

De Venecia gave the assurance on the day a consumer group launched a campaign to flood his cell phone with text messages to pressure him and other officials of the House of Representatives into junking the administration's tax proposals, particularly the one on text messaging.

Under the Constitution, any revenue measure must emanate from the House.

Telecom firms warned the government that any additional tax would paralyze one of the few growing sectors in the Philippine economy.

They said they would definitely pass on to the country's cellphone subscribers the additional tax. More than 150 million messages are sent daily by the country's 28 million subscribers.

JDV/A4

VAL HANDUMON

A COOL MILLION

Three informants whose tips led to the arrest of three kidnappers on the "Most Wanted" list receive P1.5 million in cash reward from President Arroyo on Tuesday. They had tipped off the Anti-Kidnapping Task Force on the whereabouts of members of kidnap-for-ransom gangs.

'Survival,' says Palace; it's 'suicide' for Joker

By Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Christine O. Avendaño

PASSING the P2 per liter tax on petroleum products and other tax measures is a "matter of national survival" because a record 94 percent of the revenues the government had to collect next year will be used to pay its debts, a Malacañang official and a congressman said yesterday.

But an administration senator warned that adopting the additional tax on fuel at this time would be "political suicide" amid surging world crude prices.

Sen. Joker Arroyo urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to "rein in the tax terrorists" in her Cabinet for proposing additional taxes on oil to avert the looming fiscal crisis.

"That would be a double whammy to consumers. And it would become a triple whammy when the prices of goods increase as a consequence of the increase in the cost of and the tax on oil," Arroyo said in a statement.

The alternative to not impos-

SURVIVAL/A4

Foreign investment shrinking 34% each year

TOTAL foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Philippines has been falling by an annual average of 34.1 percent over the past six years, according to a report by the Institute for Development and Econometric Analysis.

India and Vietnam have now overtaken the Philippines in attracting FDI, while Japanese investors—still the country's biggest source of foreign direct investment accounting for 31.1 percent—are now going to China.

Investment policy reforms by successive administrations in the late 1980s and 1990s helped boost FDI pledges to a record P262.1 billion ($4.6 billion) in 1997.

But since then FDI pledges had contracted progressively, hitting just P34 billion last year, the lowest recorded level so far, the report said.

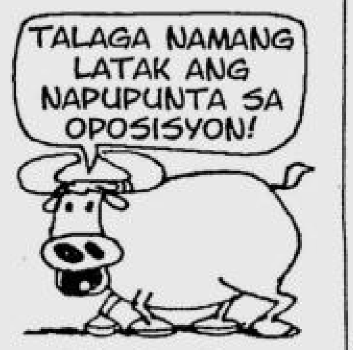
It said a number of factors contributed to the loss of FDI in the Philippines, among them the 1997 regional financial crisis, political instability, the high cost of doing business and poor infrastructure.

The report said Japanese investment pledges to the Philippines had contracted from $43.9 billion in 1998 to just $8.8 billion last year.

It said China had become the largest recipient of FDI in Asia totaling $52.7 billion in 2002.

"Japanese firms are no longer

FOREIGN/A8



TALAGA NAMANG LATAK ANG NAPUPUNTA SA OPOSISYON!

Majority blinks, will take 'crumbs'

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

SHARE the power.

Drop the "boxing" stance; try basketball drafting rules.

Anything to stop the bickering.

Senators yesterday appeared willing to move past

MAJORITY/A20

US Embassy: No cut in assistance to RP for now

SPECULATIONS to the contrary, US financial and military aid to the Philippines will continue—for now.

"There has been no decision made to cut economic and military assistance to the Philippines. At the present it stays," US Embassy spokesperson Ruth Urry yesterday told The Associated Press.

Urry also said the Philippines would remain a major non-Nato ally, giving it continued access to US defense equipment and supplies.

Strained relations between the United States and the Philippines over the latter's early withdrawal of its troops from Iraq to secure the freedom of Angelo de la Cruz, a Filipino truck driver taken hostage by Iraqi insurgents, had triggered speculation that a reduction or suspension of development aid from the United States was forthcoming.

Indeed, a senior Filipino diplomat said the Department of Foreign Affairs had warned President Macapagal-Arroyo to expect a backlash after she decided to order the troops home.

The official, who asked not to be named, told reporters that reprisal from Washington was certain.

"But this reprisal will not be drastic. We will feel the effect little by little," the official said.

The US Agency for International Development has provided more

US EMBASSY/A4

So, what else is new?

By PDI Research

IF THE UNITED States cuts its development assistance to the Philippines, it will be nothing new.

Official assistance coursed through the US Agency for International Development has been on a much lower level compared to that given before the Philippine Senate voted to close down the US military bases in the country in 1991.

From $324.3 million in 1991, US assistance dropped to $199 million in 1992—down by almost 40 percent. This was further reduced by about 70 percent in 1993 to $81.7 million, which was in turn decreased by 44 percent in

SO, WHAT ELSE/A4

PDI, employees union sign 3-year, ₱74.6-million CBA package

ERIK ARAZAS

TOGETHER, PDI management and union officers celebrate the signing of their CBA on Tuesday: (Standing, left to right) employees union officers Benjie Tablazon, Genie Lagman, Chona Gomez, Liberty Lalicon, Marie-Fe Reyes, Adela Mendoza, Darwin Romanillos, Norman Bordadora, Grig Montegrande, Christian Esguerra, Noel Piano, lawyers Cezar Maravilla Jr. and Roberto Parel, VP for marketing Donald Lim, HR management head Shirman Tan, Associate Editor Abel Ulanday, HR manager Rolly Suarez. (Seated) Joel Nigos, Mike Ubac, Dona P. Pazzibugan, PDI chair Marixi Rufino-Prieto, PDI president Sandy P. Romualdez, SVP for Corporate Services Dave Valdes, VP/CFO Luis Ymson Jr. and accounting head Evelyn Escueta.

THE PHILIPPINE Daily Inquirer and its employees' union yesterday signed a three-year collective bargaining agreement that would raise the average union wage in the company to about P25,000 a month.

The P74.6-million CBA package called for a monthly pay increase of P2,000 in the first year, P2,300 in the second year and P2,300 in the third year.

The pay increases over three years will boost to at least P25,600 the current average union wage of P19,000 a month.

The CBA, which took effect retroactive to July 11, was signed by management officials headed by PDI president Alexandra R. Prieto-Romualdez and Philippine Daily Inquirer Employees Union officers led by Dona Pazzibugan.

Immediately after the signing ceremony, the company distributed a signing bonus of

PDI/A8

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

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By Fe Zamora

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Baraquel also noted that the Vatican letter spoke of a feminist tendency to be selfish and make demands "for ourselves."

"There is no compartmentalization, let alone contradiction between caring for ourselves as women and caring for others," Baraquel said.

She said women in the marginal sectors also struggle for women's access to the benefits of reform.

"Feminism has a shared tradition and a continuing complementary role to play these struggles," Baraquel said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has signed a proclamation declaring 2005 as the centennial year of the feminist movement in the Philippines.

"May she hold fast and not be deterred by the Vatican's criticism of feminism," Baraquel said.

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"No feminist debates the fact that Jesus was born a man. Instead, we Catholic feminists cherish Jesus Christ as a feminist man and a sign of the feminine principle in God," she said.

Baraquel also noted that the Vatican letter spoke of a feminist tendency to be selfish and make demands "for ourselves."

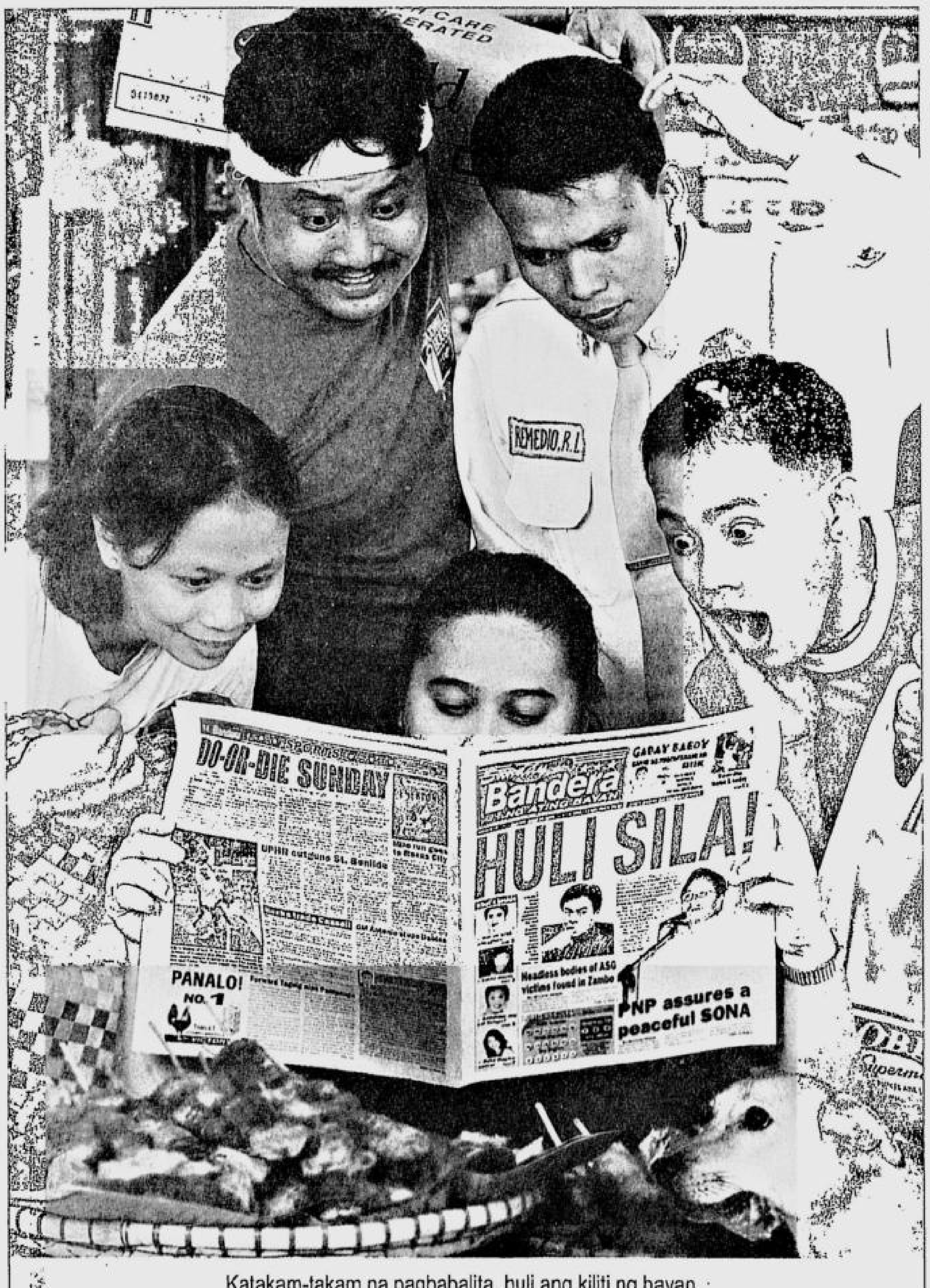
"There is no compartmentalization, let alone contradiction between caring for ourselves as women and caring for others," Baraquel said.

She said women in the marginal sectors also struggle for women's access to the benefits of reform.

"Feminism has a shared tradition and a continuing complementary role to play these struggles," Baraquel said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has signed a proclamation declaring 2005 as the centennial year of the feminist movement in the Philippines.

"May she hold fast and not be deterred by the Vatican's criticism of feminism," Baraquel said



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Converting nuclear plant makes more sense–solon

IT WOULD make more economic sense to convert and utilize the idled Bataan Nuclear Power Plant than continue paying billions of pesos for its debt and maintenance, administration Rep. Joey Salceda said yesterday.

The Albay congressman, who chairs the House committee on economic affairs, believes the government should pursue "in earnest" its proposal to transform the BNPP into an "an earning energy asset without resurrecting the nuclear issue."

Salceda said the country would suffer more opportunity losses if nothing was done about the plant which he described as "already a sunk cost."

He noted that between now and 2007, the country would need to shell out P7.4 billion in debt payments for the mothballed facility, on top of the P67 billion it has paid in the past 18 years.

'What a pity'

From 2003 to 2007, the government will also have to spend a total of P284.6 million to preserve the BNPP assets lying idle in Morong, Bataan, he said in a statement.

"Whew, what a waster. What a country. What a pity," Salceda said.

Faced with the threat of a possible energy crisis in four years, President Macapagal-Arroyo revived an earlier proposal to convert the BNPP into a gas-fired power plant that could generate 600 megawatts of electricity.

The proposal was immediately shot down by legislators, activists and even scientists on the ground that, among other things, it would be more expensive to revive it than to build an entirely new natural gas power plant in Batangas.

Malacañang retreated and said the fate of the BNPP would now depend on the outcome of a technical feasibility study being conducted by the energy department.

Burden since 1984

Built in 1984 by the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos under a deal with the US-based Westinghouse Corp., the BNPP has been a financial burden on the country that continues to pay $155,000 a day to service debts incurred by the plant. The entire project, which the post-Marcos-Aquino government declared fraudulent and refused to operate, is estimated to have cost $2 billion.

Salceda recalled that the BNPP cost was transferred to the national government on June 30, 1986 at a cost of P42.3 billion when it was mothballed by the Aquino administration.

"If the same money had been invested from 1986 to 2004, the P42.3 billion ... would have compounded to P258 billion at 10 percent to P510 billion at 14 percent," he said.

Party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales said the government should assemble a group of engineers and planners to start a comprehensive study on the viability of refitting the BNPP if it was serious in its proposal to convert it to a natural gas plant.

Rosales said the study should determine the technical and financial viability and the safety considerations of such a conversion. *Carlito Pablo, with a report from Cynthia Balana*

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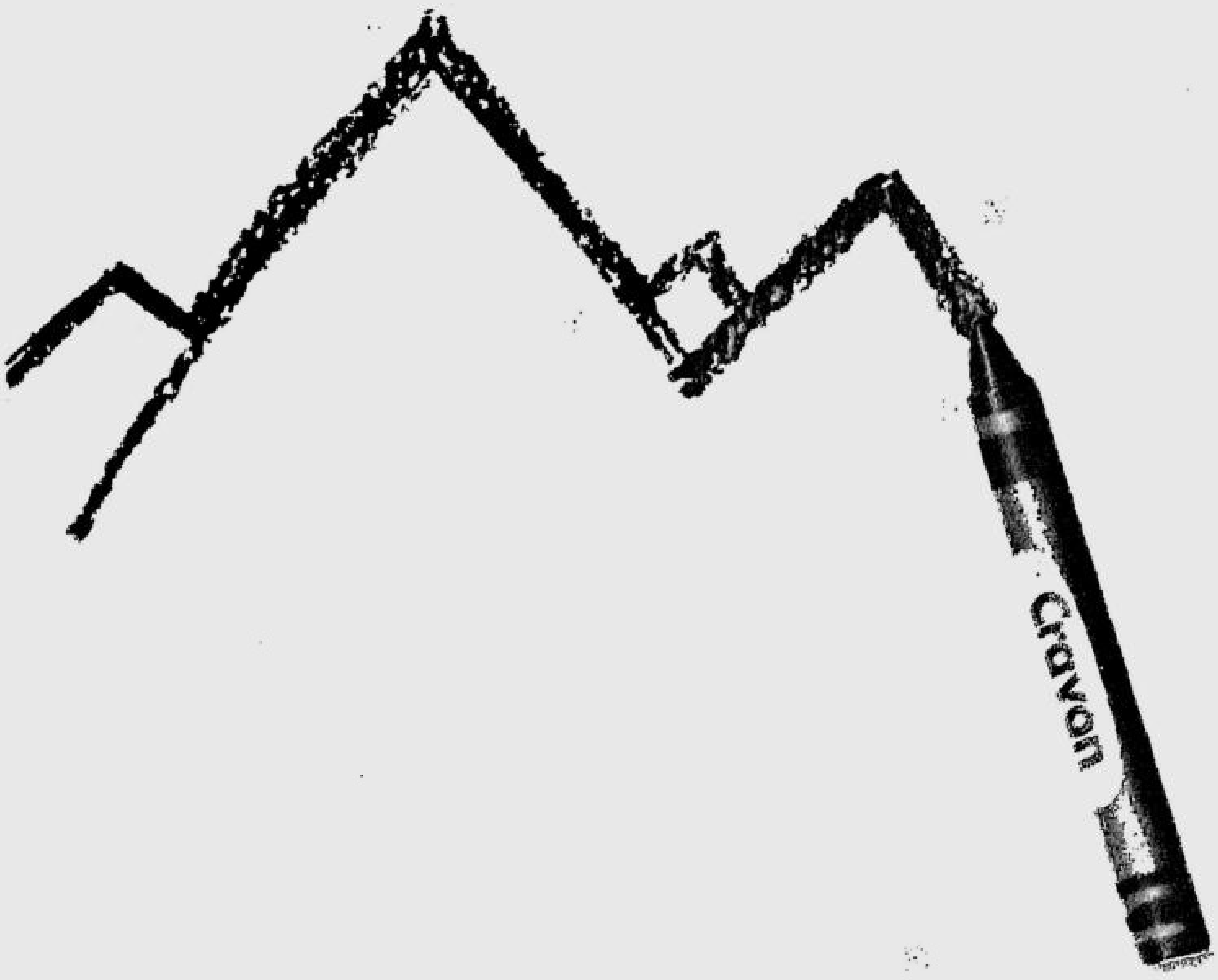

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JdV: No text message tax for 28-M subscribers

From page A1

Officials of Globe Telecom Inc. and Smart Communications Inc. said their companies were already among the country's top taxpayers. Globe paid more than P3 billion last year and Smart's parent firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. remitted P9.7 billion in taxes.

PLDT's cash cow Smart netted P16.1 billion in 2003 while Globe registered P10.3 billion in profits. This year, both companies are expected to surpass last year's performance.

Can't be reached

De Venecia said he was personally against imposing a tax on mobile phone subscribers because it would adversely affect ordinary Filipinos.

"I will lead the revolt against a tax on text messaging because this will prejudice the 28 million subscribers and considering that this is the cheapest form of communication for Filipinos and a major instrument of uniting the country or dividing the country as the case may be," De Venecia said.

The antitax advocacy group Txt Power claimed success in its campaign to send messages of protest to De Venecia's cell phone number 0917-8101226.

"We've been trying to call his number but it can longer be reached," said Txt Power officer Trixie Concepcion, hinting that the flood of text messages must have prompted the Speaker's staff to turn off his cellular phone.

De Venecia has at least three cell phones, but his aides are the ones holding them.

Asked if he received a barrage of text messages, the Speaker said: "No, no text and also because I was in Malacañang the whole morning," he said, laughing.

De Venecia said he had not changed his mobile phone number. "I would be delighted to receive all the messages because I agree with them," he said.

Concepcion said Txt Power would soon conduct discussions and public fora in schools about government plans to tax cell phone users.

"If legislators continue to press for tax measures, we would flash their numbers and cell numbers on PowerPoint and simultaneously text them (during the public fora)," she said.

Taxing the windfall profits of telecommunication firms was among the eight tax measures President Macapagal-Arroyo asked Congress to pass last month to help narrow the budget deficit. The deficit is expected to hit about P200 billion this year.

Withdrawn

De Venecia said that he already discussed the proposal to tax text messaging with Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong and that they both agreed to withdraw any proposal to this effect.

The House financial expert, Rep. Joey Salceda (Lakas, third district, Albay) said that government managers already scuttled an earlier proposal to impose a tax on text messaging.

"There is no logic to the proposed tax on text. We are not considering any shift of taxes to the consumers from the profits of the country's giant cellular phone providers," Salceda said.

At present, telecom firms pay a 32-percent income tax, 10 percent value-added tax (VAT) and 10 percent overseas communication tax. They are also subject to a 20-percent final tax on interest income, 3 percent real estate tax, 32 percent fringe benefit tax, one percent local business tax and various fees and charges for licenses with the National Telecommunications Commission.

Finance officials said cell phone users should vent their ire on telecom companies that have been wallowing in profits and yet would still choose to pass on any additional tax to the public.

"There are proposals to impose additional taxes on the telecom sector but not on text messaging. Any tax to be imposed will be on the telecom firms and it is up to them whether they would pass on to their customers," Amatong said.

Another tax

The finance chief said the Arroyo administration had yet to determine how it would tax the so-called windfall profits of telecom companies without these firms passing on the burden to consumers.

"I think there is another tax being planned but I am not very sure of the form of the tax. Senator (Juan) Enrile is talking about a tax on windfall profit also. But on the Department of Finance side, we have not endorsed to Congress any particular tax because we are still studying the issue," Amatong said.

Considerable balance

While the franchise tax will be imposed in lieu of the VAT, De Venecia would not say if this could lead to reduced bills on the part of consumers.

"It would be unfair for me to promise the moon and the stars. We will see," he said.

In imposing the franchise tax, he said, the government would be able to strike a considerable balance between the requirement of the state to raise funds and the need of the private sector to ensure their viability. He noted that telecommunications giants were raking in huge profits.

De Venecia said the franchise tax measure would include a provision that would prohibit companies from passing on the tax to the subscribers.

At first, the government had considered expanding the VAT but later dropped the idea because it would hurt the mobile phone owners, he said.

De Venecia described the franchise tax as a "triple win formula" because it would generate revenue for the government, capture the huge profits of companies, and would not prejudice subscribers.

Sin taxes priority

In addition to the franchise tax, the House will give priority to the immediate approval of the so-called "sin taxes" on alcohol and cigarettes. It will also start preparing the tax calendar by mobilizing the House and the Senate committees on ways and means for the launching of the tax measures so that the debate can take place by September.

Lance Gokongwei, president of Digitel Mobile Philippines Inc., which operates Sun Cellular, said the government's huge budget deficit would require a combination of improved tax collection and introduction of new taxes.

"Of course, as a businessman, I hope that my sector doesn't get taxed," he said. Third-player Sun Cellular which started operations last year is still in the red.

To burden telecoms

Imposing a franchise tax on gross receipts would unduly burden the industry as it would have to be slapped also on all members of the telecom industry, most of which are financially distressed or under rehabilitation, according to Globe senior vice president Rodolfo Salalima.

Salalima said that aside from Globe and Smart, there were more than 50 telecom players operating wireless, fixed-line, international gateway and rural telecom facilities that were "in various levels of financial distress."

"If the government would insist on these new taxes, it could only lead to the demise of the telecom industry. Taxes have the power to destroy when they are unreasonable," the Globe official said. *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

'Survival,' says Palace; it's 'suicide' for Joker

From page A1

ing taxes, he said, was for government to increase revenue collection by 10 percent to collect P80 billion, the amount to be generated if the proposed tax measures are passed.

"That means that the tax burden will not be passed on to the taxpayers but to the tax collectors," the senator said.

Growing resistance

In the face of snowballing resistance to Ms Arroyo's eight-point tax program, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said the national survival would depend on the tax measures.

"We are all in this together and let us not make this another stage for national division and political strife," Bunye said.

To illustrate how dire the country's fiscal situation was, Albay Rep. Joey Salceda said that only 6 percent or P44 billion of next year's projected revenue collection of P730 billion would be left after paying off the government's maturing principal and interest payments of P686 billion.

Salceda said that his study showed that debt service as a percentage of total revenues had been accelerating over the last three years—48.7 percent in 2001, 63.12 percent in 2002, 75 percent in 2003 and 85.76 percent this year.

Before the Arroyo administration, the record debt service was 67.65 percent in 1987.

More borrowings

To cover the shortfall in revenue collection, the Arroyo administration has been resorting to domestic and foreign borrowings. The government is programmed to borrow P197.8 billion this year.

At a briefing, Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima said the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) had agreed to push at least one of the eight tax revenue measures for passage before the end of the year.

Following the weekly Ledac meeting in Malacañang, Purisima said the administration would form one task force for each of the tax measures to work on the details, collate all inputs and determine which will be prioritized.

The task forces will be filled by members of the various committees in the Senate and House of Representatives.

"Both groups (economic managers and lawmakers) agreed to work together to make sure that we move on this agenda," Purisima said. "Both realized and recognized the sense of urgency to address the fiscal situation."

Oil tax priority

Although he did not specify which tax the President wanted passed by the end of the year, Purisima hinted that it would most probably be the oil tax, which is projected to raise P29 billion in additional revenue, because it was one of the "most progressive."

Based on figures furnished by Salceda, Purisima said oil taxes contributed only 8 percent to the total tax revenue compared with 36 percent in Germany.

The trade secretary said only middle- to upper-class individuals (with annual incomes of more than P100,000) would bear the brunt of higher oil prices because they accounted for 88 percent of the total spending on transport fares and fuel for vehicles.

Purisima said that by showing to the international finance community the government's seriousness in dealing with its fiscal problems, the Philippines could get an upgrade in its credit rating.

A single notch of gain could cut foreign borrowing costs by up to P20 billion annually, he said.

Listen to all sectors

Purisima assured the public that the government would listen to all sectors before finalizing the tax measures for approval in Congress.

He expressed confidence that once the administration had convinced the public of the seriousness of the country's fiscal problems, it would push forward its tax package with reduced resistance.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said lawmakers were convinced during the Ledac meeting that the fiscal deficit was a problem that needed to be addressed promptly.

"There were a lot of views expressed on how to address this but everybody recognized there was a problem," Drilon told reporters.

He said that the Cabinet reminded Congress that it had to raise P100 billion a year to address the deficit problem.

"It was explained to both houses of Congress that we have to raise this much, both in terms of revenue and cost-cutting measures," the Senate President said.

Exceeds deficit target

The government already ran up a budget deficit of P80.1 billion in the first half of 2004, exceeding its target of P79.6 billion. The government is targeting a budget deficit of about P200 billion for the year.

Senator Arroyo said Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the committee on ways and means, would be asking government officials how consumers could be spared from the tax burden.

"Let's see how the tax terrorists will perform," he said.

Sen. Pia Cayetano agreed that improving revenue collection could be key to the problem rather than the implementation of the proposed additional oil taxes.

"I have not heard solutions to improving tax collections (in the ongoing debate)," Cayetano said.

Alternatives

Bunye said the government was willing to "listen to the opposition and all well-meaning sectors but they must present alternatives to ensure our national survival and not (just) means to delay the pain."

He said the government would have to conduct an information drive to explain the severity of the problem to the public. *With a report from AFP*

US Embassy: No cut in assistance to RP for now

From page A1

than $4 billion in assistance to the Philippines over the past 30 years.

The Philippines is also the world's fourth largest recipient of US foreign military financing, obtaining $114.46 million last year, according to the US Embassy here.

Not under review

In Washington, the US state department said Monday that it was not reviewing the Philippines' status as a "major non-Nato ally" despite the troop pullout.

Washington conferred the status on the Philippines in October last year to foster cooperation on military research and development and give the Philippines greater access to US defense equipment and supplies.

"Major Non-Nato Ally status is not currently under review," the US state department said in a written reply to questions raised at a media briefing.

Doubts over the status arose after US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone flew home for consultations with his superiors after Washington accused Manila of caving in to terrorists.

But Malacañang yesterday appeared not to care whether the Philippines was stripped of its major non-Nato ally status—or booted out of the US-led Coalition of the Willing, as Ricciardone had confirmed.

"As far as we are concerned, this is no longer an issue," Ms Arroyo's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in an interview with RMN radio.

He said the meeting on Monday between Foreign Secretary Delia Albert and Ricciardone "is a good signal that our relations remain strong."

Bunye also dismissed speculation that the Philippines would be getting less aid from the United States in retaliation for the troop pullout.

He said that the Philippine Defense Program would remain in force and would continue for the next five years, and that RP-US business ties were firm, as shown by the scheduled holding of the US-Asean Business Advisory Council conference in the country next month.

Patching things up

Bunye finally admitted the strain after days of hemming and hawing.

"It may take some time to patch things up, but time will do the healing as we strive to resolve our principled disagreements," he said.

When they met on Monday, the first time since Manila angered Washington because of the troop pullout, Ricciardone and Albert were to have issued a joint statement saying that diplomatic relations remained strong.

But the joint statement was scrapped, reportedly because Washington found the wording of the DFA-drafted document to be too friendly.

Ricciardone also stood by the US state department's earlier statement dropping the Philippines from the coalition that backed the military action against Iraq.

"We appreciate the position of the US government, as well as the candor of the US ambassador," Bunye said in a statement.

"The strains brought about by recent events are part of a maturing and mellowing partnership that recognizes the uniqueness of each other's interests within a larger strategic universe," he said.

Bunye said that despite the strain, the United States remained the Philippines' strongest ally in the world, "considering our long history of friendship and sacrifice for freedom."

Back to Iraq

But Albert still would not admit categorically that the Philippines was no longer part of the Coalition of the Willing, although she said Manila was open to again send troops to Iraq under the auspices of the United Nations.

She also said she had yet to see any indication that Washington was punishing Manila for the troop pullout.

"I have not seen one sign of that," Albert said in her weekly press conference, referring to her list of upcoming US-RP activities ranging from military exercises to investment missions scheduled this year.

She also said there had been no official communication from Washington regarding the Philippines' ouster from the coalition.

Albert said the Philippines' future involvement in Iraq would be under the auspices of the United Nations.

Later explaining Albert's remarks, Ariel Abadilla, the assistant foreign secretary for American affairs who was present at the press conference, said this would include the sending of troops to Iraq.

"We are open to sending a humanitarian contingent to Iraq as long as it is under Resolution 1546," Abadilla said, referring to the resolution of the UN Security Council last month that restored Iraqi sovereignty, pledged international assistance to the Iraqi reconstruction, and delineated the role of the US-led multinational force in keeping the peace in the embattled country.

But according to a DFA source, Ricciardone was noncommittal when Albert mentioned the possibility of sending a new Philippine contingent to Iraq under the United Nations.

Paragraph 8 of the resolution says that the United Nations, acting through the secretary general, his special envoy and the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq, "should strengthen its vital role in Iraq, including providing humanitarian relief, promoting the economic reconstruction of and conditions for sustainable development in Iraq, and advancing efforts to restore and establish national and local institutions for representative government."

Military forces

Paragraph 14 urges UN member-states "to contribute assistance under this mandate, including military forces, to the multinational force." *Reports from Inquirer wires, Gil Cabacungan Jr., Juliet Labog-Javellana and Jerome Aning*

So, what else is new?

From page A1

1994 to $45.2 million.

With more than $5 billion in aid since 1946, the United States used to be the biggest donor to the Philippines. But since the closure of its military bases, it has been edged out by Japan in terms of official development assistance (ODA).

Japan's ODA to the Philippines, mostly in concessional loans, totaled $1.01 billion from 1999 to 2001. USAID funds for the Philippines, though mostly in grants, were just about one-eighth, or 12 percent, of Japan's assistance during the same period.

The decrease in US aid after the closure of the bases continued until 2000, when annual assistance reached only $34.7 million—the lowest in the last 12 years.

This was mainly due to the reduction of the Economic Support Fund (ESF), which was established by the United States to promote what it called "economic and political stability" in regions where it has "special security interests."

Provided on a grant basis, the ESF is used for various economic purposes like infrastructure and development projects.

Although tied to security interests and not necessarily intended for military expenditures, these grants allow the recipient government to free its own funds for military programs.

The ESF for the Philippines plunged from $123 million in 1991 to $47 million in 1992, and to $5 million in 1993. There was no ESF from 1994 to 2000. It was revived in 2001 with a $7-million grant.

In 2002, the ESF rose to $33 million and in 2003, to $20 million. According to the USAID Philippine website (http://www.usaid-phl.gov), the ESF for 2004 is $18 million.

2 other programs

The increase of the ESF in 2002 was announced after President Macapagal-Arroyo's six-day swing through US cities. It was "because the US respects us as its partner in the war against terrorism," the President said then.

In addition to the ESF, USAID current assistance to the Philippines consists of development assistance and the Food for Peace program.

Development assistance provides grants to support programs in economic and agricultural development, population, health, nutrition, environmental management, governance, and humanitarian assistance.

The Food for Peace program, sometimes referred to as PL (for Public Law) 480, provides food aid to the Philippine government through concessional sales (Title 1) and by donation (Title 11 and Section 206).

The USAID package for 2003 may be broken down thus: $51 million, development assistance; $20 million, ESF; $20 million, PL4801.

Last Aug. 6, the United States and the Philippines signed an agreement for another $20 million in assistance under PL4801.

No change in policy

Some of the ongoing US-AID-funded programs are the Livelihood Enhancement and Peace (LEAP), to reintegrate former combatants in Mindanao; the Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM), to help accelerate development on the island; and programs to increase access to family planning services and control the incidence of tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

To questions from the INQUIRER, an official of the National Economic and Development Authority, the government agency assigned to process proposals for ODA and coordinate ODA-related activities, said they were not aware of any change in assistance policy.

"We are proceeding as normal and programming is continuing. And the pipeline is moving," the official said.

The pipeline refers to projects being lined up for funding approval. As of end December 2003, the funding for such projects totaled $111 million.

Tough graft-buster named postmaster

By Armand N. Nocum

PRESIDENTIAL Anti-Graft Commission Chair Dario C. Rama, who steered the office through its most fruitful years, yesterday took his oath as the new postmaster general.

No replacement has been named, but Palace sources said Defense Undersecretary Connie de Guzman, President Macapagal-Arroyo's former appointments secretary, is one of those being eyed to take over from Rama.

Rama was silent on the matter, but PAGC Commissioner Teresita Baltazar confirmed his scheduled oath-taking in Malacañang at 3:30 p.m. yesterday, an event supposedly purposely kept from the media.

After his graft-busting stint at the PAGC, President Arroyo reportedly now wants Rama to clean up the corruption-ridden post office.

"The pearl of great price of the Macapagal administration is leaving us," said Baltazar.

Under Rama's two-year-and-five-month stint at the PAGC, scores of ranking government officials, including former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza, came under his scrutiny and were recommended for either dismissal or suspension from the government service.

In the case of the two officials, however, Malacañang's Committee of Peers reversed the PAGC's ruling.

Baltazar cited Rama not only for standing up to political pressure but also for sticking to the PAGC mandate to resolve administrative cases involving members of the Cabinet in 60 days.

"He is an inspiration to us all," said Baltazar.

Rama, a native of Davao City, earned the respect of his peers and subordinates for his modest and frugal lifestyle. He was the only member of the Cabinet who took a jeepney to work from his rented room on Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City.

Early in his term, Malacañang offered Rama a car and a cellular phone, but he refused them. He also insisted on paying for every piece of paper he and the media used in his office. He was also known to return gifts brought to his office.

Rama was appointed a commissioner of the Commission on Elections in 1986 and of the then Presidential Commission Against Graft and Corruption in 1994. He became chair of the PAGC on Feb. 15, 2002.

Officials mum on Chinoys' abduction

By Nelson F. Flores

INTERIOR Secretary Angelo Reyes has refused to comment on the reported abduction of three Chinese-Filipino brothers in Cavite over the weekend.

The INQUIRER repeatedly tried to contact Reyes, who used to head the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force, to no avail.

Interior Undersecretary for Administration Melchor Rosales in an interview said no statement would be forthcoming for the moment to ensure the safety of the persons involved. He added, however, that the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response (Pacer) team was on top of the situation.

"We are doing everything to see to it that the abduction victims would be fine," Rosales said.

Police investigation showed that unidentified gunmen abducted the brothers—Patterson, Richard and Jose Ngo—who operate a business at the industrial park in Rosario last Saturday.

The brothers were on their way to Tanza when the gunmen in a sedan blocked their sport utility vehicle. One of the gunmen took over the wheel of the victims' vehicle, but Patterson was able to jump out and escape.

"At the moment, we can't give out any information about the case," said an official of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force. "Our paramount concern is the safety of the victims."

"We are not aware of any ransom demand, and we are not at liberty to release information until after the victims are freed," a police investigator, who asked not to be named, said.

Police later recovered the victims' abandoned Mitsubishi Pajero at the University Hills Subdivision in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Press takes up runaway growth

REPRESENTATIVES of the press and experts on population and development will get together next week to take a hard look at problems arising from uncontrolled population growth.

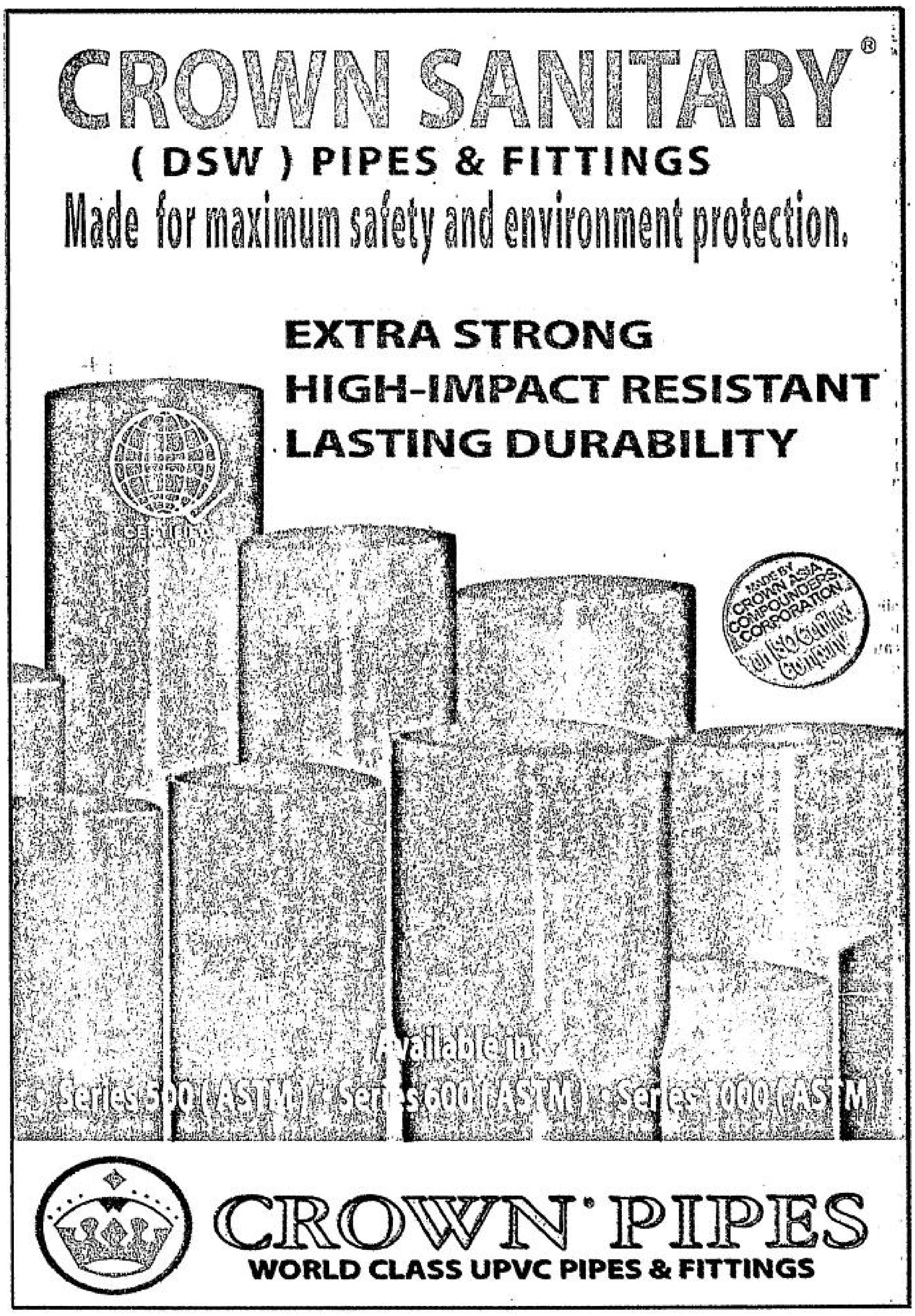
The forum will be a series of seminar-workshops that the Philippine Press Institute (PPI), the national association of Philippine newspapers, is organizing for its members.

The forum is supported by the Philippine Center for Population and Development (PCPD).

The seminar-workshops will be held at the following places and dates: in Subic for PPI members from Luzon, Aug. 15-18; Cebu City for members from the Visayas, Sept. 12-15, and Davao City for Mindanao members, Oct. 17-20.

The experts who will address the seminars are former Health Undersecretary Mario Taguiwais and demographers Dr. Mercedes B. Concepcion and Dr. Aurora Perez. Serving as journalist-resource persons will be Vergel O. Santos, media critic and editorial consultant of BusinessWorld; Juan L. Mercado, director of the Press Foundation of Asia, and Vicente G. Tirol, publisher of the defunct Pinoy Times and lecturer at Ateneo de Manila University's Department of Communication.

Ma. Socorro Camacho-Reyes, president of PCPD, and Milagros G. Corpus, PCPD grants officer, will also be on hand.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Long wait for SC decision for Abadilla 5

By Philip C. Tubeza

WHAT is taking the Supreme Court so long to resolve the case of the Abadilla 5?

The wife of one of the five men convicted of killing Col. Rolando Abadilla posed the question yesterday on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the promulgation of the death sentences on the men.

"What is taking them so long? We hope that we would be given fair treatment and the truth would finally come out," said Marilou Lumanog, wife of Abadilla 5 member Lenido Lumanog.

The death sentence on Lumanog and his fellow convicts SPO2 Cesar Fortuna, Joel de Jesus, Rameses de Jesus and Augusto Santos has been under review in the Supreme Court since February 2000.

The five men were convicted on Aug. 11, 1999, of Abadilla's murder in an ambush on Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City, on June 13, 1996.

Soliman Santos Jr., Lumanog's lawyer, said the high tribunal should have already ruled on the case since the convicts and the government had filed their respective briefs.

He said Lumanog and the other convicts filed their appellant briefs late last year while the Office of the Solicitor General filed its brief last May.

On July 6, 2004, the Abadilla 5 filed a "Consolidated Motion for Early Decision" but the Supreme Court merely noted this motion in a resolution on July 27, 2004.

"After all these years, all of the accused agreed to submit the case for resolution but it was merely noted. That was not really encouraging," Soliman said.

The five convicts asked the high tribunal to reverse their conviction since they were allegedly tortured by the police into admitting the crime.

The Alex Boncayao Brigade of the New People's Army had claimed responsibility for Abadilla's murder and absolved the five men of any involvement in the killing.

"There were several pieces of hard evidence, including ballistics matches and the wristwatch taken from the slain Abadilla which was returned by his killers, which supported the ABB claim," Soliman said.

He said the high court had also not acted on Lumanog's petition to be returned to the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTI) because of his condition as a kidney transplant patient.

"They did not even have that noted," Soliman said.

Instead, Lumanog was "forcibly transferred" from the NKTI to the New Bilibid Prisons (NBP) in Muntinlupa last February despite a Supreme Court resolution saying that he could stay at the hospital, Soliman said.

Marilou Lumanog said Bureau of Corrections Director Dionisio Santiago still has failed to provide her husband a ventilated room at the NBP.

While convicts from prominent families have air-conditioned cells, Lenido's does not have a single window, she said.

Marilou said though that her husband's condition has stabilized, thanks to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo who provided him with anti-rejection drugs.

The Lumanog family, however, still has to shoulder Lenido's diabetes and heart medication, she said.

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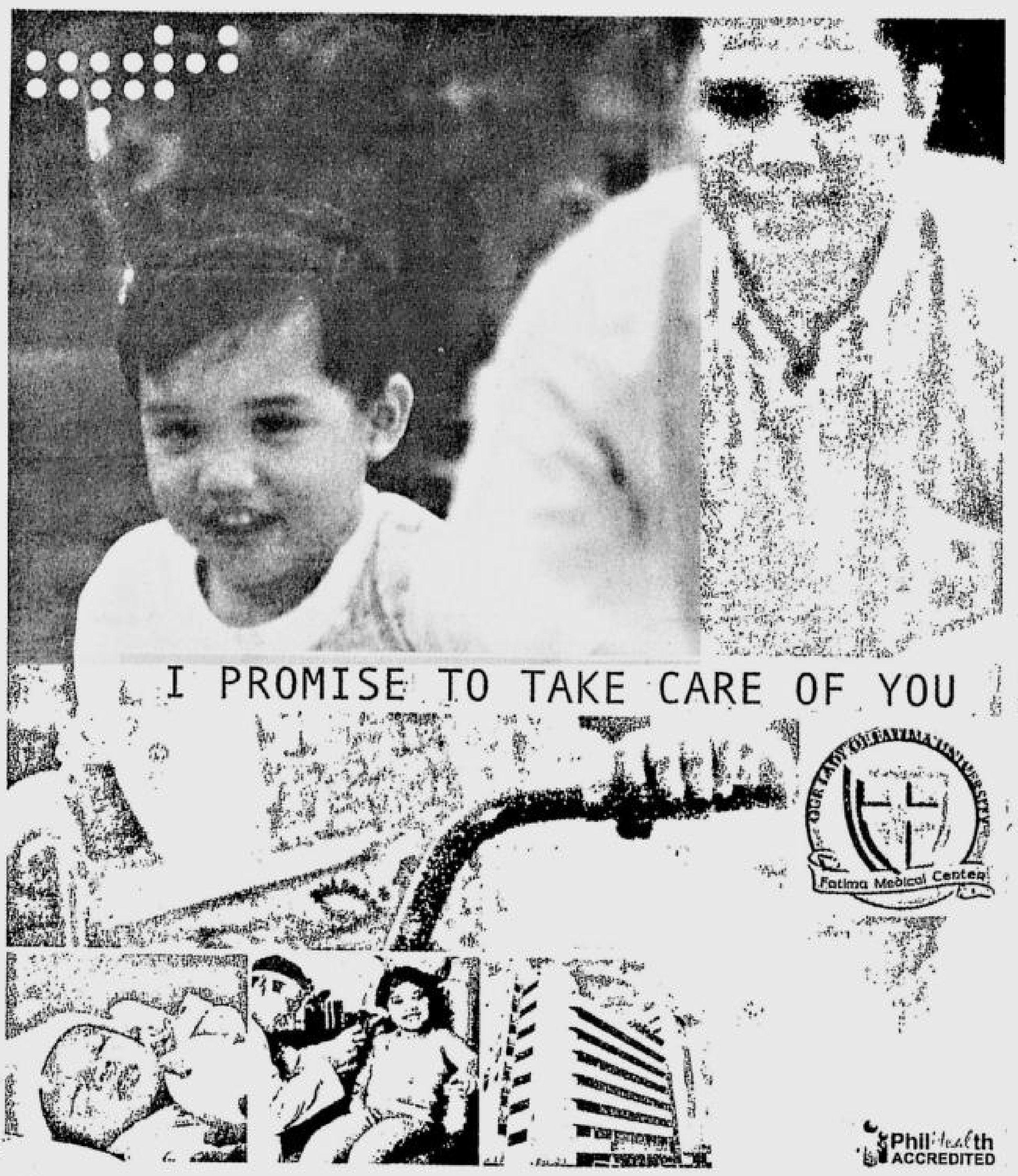
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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, August 11, 2004
19th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ezk 9:1-7; 10:18-22
Gospel: Mt 18:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples, "If your brother or sister has sinned against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are in private, and if he listens to you, you have won your brother. If you are not listened to, take with you one or two others so that the case may be decided by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he still refuses to listen to them, tell it to the assembled Church. But if he does not listen to the Church, then regard such a one as a pagan or a publican.

"I say to you: whatever you bind on earth, heaven will keep bound; and whatever you unbind on earth, heaven will keep unbound.

"In like manner, I say to you: if on earth two of you are united in asking for anything, it will be granted to you by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered in my Name, I am there among them."

Commentary

"You can calculate the worth of a man by the number of his enemies, and the importance of a work of art by the harm that is spoken of it." This remarkable statement was made in a letter by the 19th century French writer Gustave Flaubert. It is difficult now to get inside an aristocratic mind, but (I suppose) this is how the world would look from there. Aristocrats need the hatred of "the dead level of the masses" in order to feel that they themselves are on a higher level.

Jesus told his followers to expect hatred, "If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before you" (Jn 15:18). But this does not come, as it does in Flaubert's case, from a feeling of superiority; it comes from a realistic knowledge of the world. The Christian does not depend on anyone's hatred, but tries to disarm hatred with love. "Owe no one anything, except to love one another" wrote St. Paul (Rom 13:8).

Today's reading tells how we should deal with the criminality of another Christian, in the light of the Father's concern that "not one should perish." It is not about punishment or revenge, nor about feeling superior to them, nor about "restoring the balance of justice" (what does that mean?), but about sincerely trying to win back an erring brother or sister.

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BY R. B. VERA

Controversial general promoted after stint in Iraq

By Alcuin Papa

FORMER Iraq contingent head Brig. Gen. Jovito Palparan, who is facing a string of human rights violation charges, was promoted to the number three position in the Philippine Army, much to the chagrin of human rights advocates.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER, Palparan said he assumed the post of chief of staff of the 75,000-strong Philippine Army last Friday.

The position, he said, "deals mostly with paperwork and management."

Palparan was the last commanding officer of the 51-man Philippine humanitarian contingent in Iraq which was pulled out ahead of schedule last month by the government to save the life of hostage Angelo de la Cruz.

His new position calls for a two-star rank, which means that Palparan will likely get another star.

But human rights groups will not take Palparan's promotion sitting down.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teddy Casiño told the INQUIRER his group would definitely contest Palparan's appointment in the Commission on Appointments.

Casiño's and other human rights organizations had filed administrative and criminal charges against Palparan for alleged human rights violations committed by the officer during his term as chief of the Army's 204th Brigade based in Mindoro, specifically the deaths of activists Eddie Gumanoy and Eden Marcellana in April of last year.

In fact, according to Casiño, Palparan received his first star "when everyone was looking the other way."

"This [promotion] is bad news. It sends chills down the spine of the human rights community. This is dangerous because during his time, Mindoro was made a laboratory for new counterinsurgency tactics where civilians were mostly affected," Casiño said.

Casiño said Palparan should be made to answer for the human rights violations "more so since the cases are due to be revived by the justice department."

Palparan, however, laughed off Casiño's claims and threat to question his promotion in the Commission on Appointments.

"*Kalokohan yan. Nanggugulo lang sila*.(That's rubbish. They are just making trouble)," Palparan told the INQUIRER.

He said his new position was more managerial and staff work and did not involve tactical matters. "Let it be then if they [human rights groups] think that. Let them fool themselves." He did admit, however, that the position would include matters involving training doctrines.

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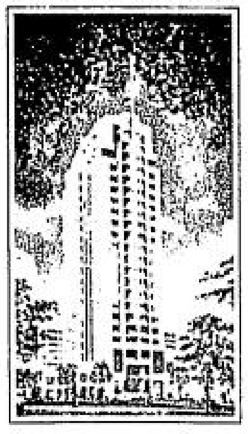

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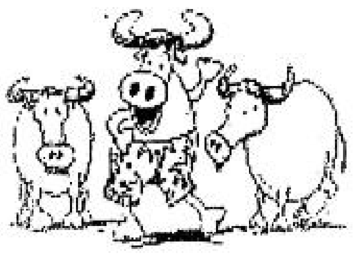

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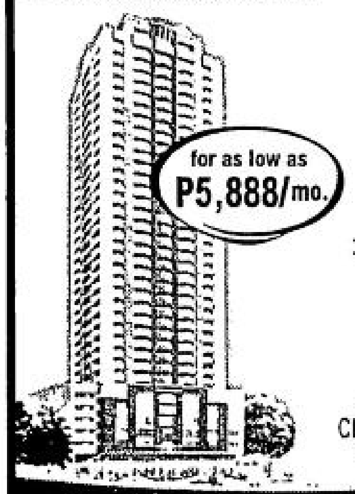

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Foreign investment shrinking 34% each year

From page A1

keen on the Philippines as an attractive regional manufacturing hub in Asia," the report said. "They now prefer China due to its low cost of doing business and its huge market size."

Based on a recent survey conducted by the Japan External Trade Organization (Jetro), 36 percent of new offshore investments by Japanese manufacturers in 2002 went to China while only 14 percent went to Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines.

Although the Philippine government approved P115.5 billion worth of FDI in the first quarter of this year, up from the P6.5 billion for the same period last year, it "does not necessarily mean an improvement in the country's investment climate," the report said.

One-time, big ticket project

"The increase is due mainly to a one-time, big ticket project by GNPower, owned by Power Partners of Nauru, which amounted to P96.5 billion."

The report said there were no foreign investment pledges in the mining sector during the first quarter of this year due to the Supreme Court's decision prohibiting 100 percent foreign-owned firms from mining operations in the Philippines.

Death of mining

This has spelled the death of an industry, which in 1996 saw some $9.4 billion worth of foreign direct investment. Last year, just $15 million worth of investments were approved, the report said. *AFP*

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Cuddling Carl and Clarence 'one by one' dream come true for Silay City mom

From page A1

icate operations over several months at the Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx. Although still sedated after the fourth and final procedure last Wednesday, the boys are starting to move their arms and legs, and are said to be responding to the sound of their mother's voice.

"I [have] never held them separately," Arlene said. "That's one thing I really want."

The single mother from Silay City in Negros Occidental brought the twins to New York a year ago with the help of sympathetic doctors, hospitals and charitable foundations.

"From the very beginning, I knew that this was a risky operation and that I [could] lose one of them, but it didn't stop me," she said.

Face-to-face soon

She never wavered, Arlene added, not even on Wednesday night, when surgeons in the midst of a 17-hour operation found that the boys' brains were fused. She was soon rewarded.

Needless to say, Arlene was ecstatic that her twins were now showing signs of "good neurological health," according to the doctors.

They cited the boys' ability to move both sides of their bodies and register appropriate emotional responses.

"They really know [when] I'm in the room, because every time I speak, one of the boys is opening his eyes and moving his arms and legs," said Arlene, 31.

CLARENCE
CARL

THE AGUIRRE twins will soon be competing for mom's attention. AP

Dr. David Staffenberg, the twins' plastic surgeon, added: "If Arlene is with Carl, we've seen Clarence actually try to turn to see why Arlene is playing with this other boy."

The brothers can hear each other but have yet to meet face to face. The doctors hoped this much-awaited moment could take place "in a few days," as the young patients get closer to sitting up.

No major problems

Dr. James Goodrich, a neurosurgeon who led the operating team, said no major problems had developed and that Clarence would probably be taken off a ventilator later yesterday. Today might be Carl's turn. Some fluid had been detected in his brain, but Goodrich said there was no need to treat it immediately. He assured Arlene that both boys were "doing well."

Since the operation, the twins have shared a room in the intensive care unit of The Children's Hospital at Montefiore Medical Center (CHAM) and have been sedated to prevent them from moving too much. Staffenberg earlier said the sedation would be lightened this week.

Another year

Arlene is looking forward to going home soon. "I'd like to show people back [in the Philippines] that I have two separate and lively boys," she said. But the surgeons said skull reconstruction on Carl and Clarence would take at least a year.

The CHAM staff also reported yesterday that thousands of well-wishers from all over the world have sent "heartfelt" and supportive e-mails for the twins.

Arlene was obviously touched. "I'm just a single mother," she said. "This is really amazing. *AP*

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(NATIONAL RETAIL SUPPLIERS EXHIBITION)
Conference: August 12-13, Isla Ballroom
Exhibit: August 11-12-13, Bohol, Dapitan, Sulu & Palawan Rms.
EDSA Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City
"In Search of Retailing Excellence"
TENTATIVE PROGRAM (as of August 4, 2004)
DAY 1 August 12, 2004
Keynote Speakers
Hon. Cesar V. Purisima, Secretary, Dept. of Trade & Industry
Mr. Napoleon L. Nazareno, President/CEO, PLDT "Philippines' Overall Best Managed Company" (Asia Money)
Luncheon Presentation: Delivering Cutting Edge Solutions to Corporate Customers
Mr. Ernesto R. Alberto, Senior Vice President, PLDT Corporate Business Group
Smarter Retailing
Engr. Marnie S. Tolosa, Solutions Manager, Microsoft Philippines
Branding Strategies for Retailers
Ms. Frances J. Yu, President, FJY Consulting
The Next Generation Store: Global Trends in Retailing
Mr. Daniel Hopping, Consulting Marketing Manager, IBM Corporation (USA)
Supercharging the Value Chain – e-Retailing Transformation Thru Technology
Mr. Ernesto Jose S. Bilar, Sr. Product Manager - Process Supply Chain Solutions, Oracle South Asia
If You Don't Measure It, You Can't Manage It: Retail Metrics That Matter
Mr. Bikash Kumar, Director, Integrated Retail Management Consulting (India)
DAY 2 August 13, 2004
The Philippine Retail Industry
Mr. Bienvenido V. Tantoco III, President, PRA
Winning Trends in Advertising & Promotions
Ms. Yolanda V. Ong, Group Chairperson, Campaigns & Grey
Strategic Financing for SMEs
Amb. Jesus P. Tambunting, Chairman, Planters Development Bank
The Battle for the Customer's Share of Life
Mr. J. Richard Soriano, Founder/President, BCD Pinpoint
Luncheon Presentation: There's Better Business in GlobeQUEST Store Express
Speaker c/o GlobeQUEST
Inspirational Talk
Mr. Rod Nepomuceno, Columnist, Philippine Star
Shopper Trends - Understanding Consumers' Shopping Habits (NEW Topic)
Mr. Peter Gale, Executive Director - Southeast Asia, ACNielsen
Practical & Cost Effective Market Research on a Budget
Dr. Eduardo Roberto, Professor, Coca-cola Foundation - Int'l Marketing, Asian Institute of Management
Success Stories on Retail Entrepreneurship (NEW Topic)
Mr. Jay Aldeguer, President, Islands Souvenirs
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PDI, employees union sign 3-year, P74.6-million CBA package

From page A1

P15,000 cash to all employees plus P8,000 worth of gift certificates.

"Let's continue to work together in producing the No. 1 newspaper in the country," Romualdez said at the general meeting.

Pazzibugan, who headed the PDIEU negotiating panel, said both sides came to a better understanding of each other's views during the CBA negotiations that began on June 11 and ended on Aug. 4.

Highlights

Other highlights of the 2004-06 CBA package:

- An annual rice subsidy of P12,000 in the first year, P12,000 in the second year, and P14,000 in the third year.
- A life and accident insurance coverage of P250,000 for each employee.
- Medical insurance coverage of up to P300,000 for each employee and a P4,500 subsidy for the medical insurance coverage of his/her dependents.
- Free antibiotics for each employee and an annual P2,500 antibiotic subsidy for each of his/her dependents.
- A P100,000 death benefit for each employee and P15,000 for each immediate member of his/her family.

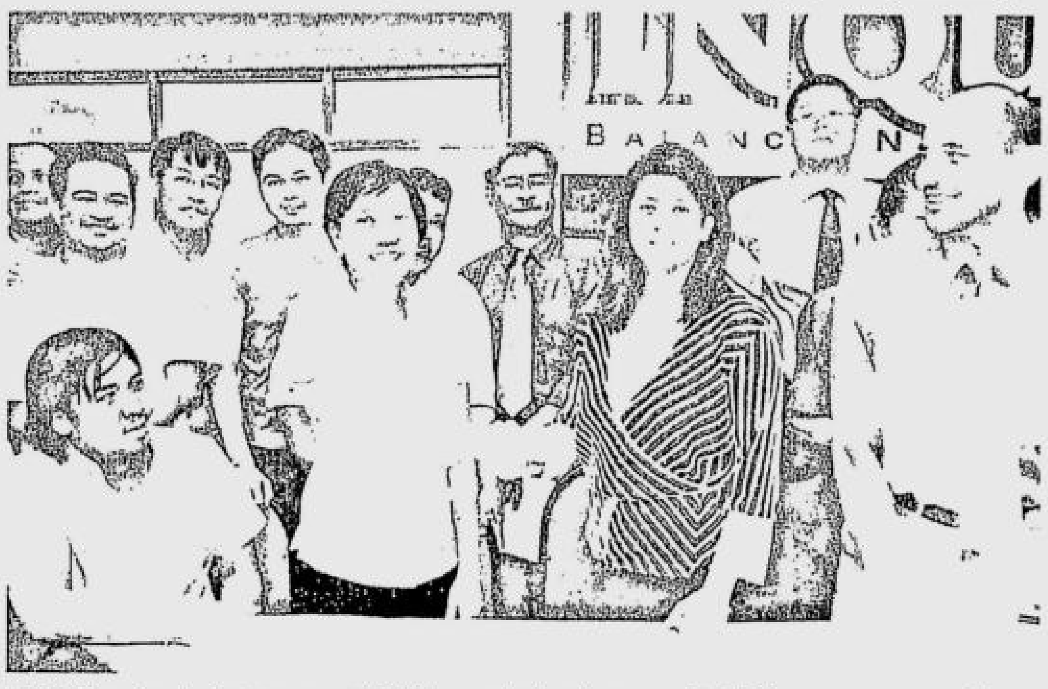
The CBA package also provides for an annual eyeglass subsidy of P3,000 for each employee, birthday gift of P250 in addition to the birthday leave, marriage gift of P1,500, longevity pay of up to P160, and incentive pay of P500 for employees who work on Easter Sunday, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Benefits on top of bonuses

The benefits are on top of the mid-year bonus and Christmas bonus. Employees also enjoy an 18-day vacation leave, 18-day sick leave and 10-day emergency leave.

Five percent of the company's annual net income is also divided among the employees, a profit-sharing scheme unique in the media industry. The profit share for the year 2003 that each employee received amounted to P92,000.

The new CBA is the sixth such agreement concluded in the company's 18-year history.



HAPPY ending to the two-month CBA negotiations between the PDI management and the employees union panel is sealed by PDI president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and PDI Employees Union president Dona Pazzibugan. ERIK ARAZAS

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Lifestyle check flunker turned in by own relatives

By Armand N. Nocum

IT WOULD make for an excellent episode in a legal drama series.

Two brothers have succeeded in having their stepmother, a government lawyer, fired from her job after they informed the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission about her undeclared and undervalued assets worth almost P20 million.

Ordered dismissed from the service by President Macapagal-Arroyo was incoming Assistant City Prosecutor Evelyn Brul-Cruz of Manila. She was the latest official to fail the government's lifestyle check.

Malacañang announced on Friday that it was upholding the PAGC decision declaring Cruz liable for violation of the anti-graft law. The commission had acted on a "verified complaint" filed by the stepsons of the official, Emiliani Wilfredo Cruz and Carlos Cruz Jr.

Hailing Malacañang's move, the PAGC noted that it was the first time a public official had been turned in by her own relatives. Lawyer Ramon Elmer Gatchalian, PAGC director for legal and research, put it a little more professionally: "We have broken the taboo on graft as a well-kept family secret."

In a complaint filed on Dec. 1, 2003, the Cruz brothers noted that their stepmother had "left out" many properties when she submitted her Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) for 1999-2000. Evelyn had declared ownership of four houses and lots in Quezon City, Baguio and Laguna; a condominium and building in Manila, and cars and pieces of jewelry worth P2 million.

The brothers said she did not declare three properties in Quezon City—a P4,394,000 lot in Cubao, a lot and building worth close to P4 million on Balete Drive and another lot and building worth more than P2 million. Also, she allegedly omitted a condominium unit and club shares at the "posh" Tagaytay Highlands Country Club, and a restaurant, computer shop and billiard hall in Bulacan.

"Under-declared," the complainants said, were the P1.7-million building on Yale Street, Cubao; the close to P6-million building and lot on 8th Avenue, Cubao; the P376,390 property in Green Valley Country Club, Baguio City, and a P1.5 million property in Quiapo.

On top of these, Emiliani and Carlos claimed that their stepmother's cars cost around a million each.

Cruz denied the allegations, saying her stepchildren knew only too well that her source of income was legitimate—a trucking business left behind by her deceased husband Carlos Galman Cruz, the father of the boys. By successfully managing the business, she said, she was able to acquire the properties that she had declared.

She deliberately excluded the other properties from her SALN, she said, because it was her husband who had purchased these, and their ownership was shared by other people.

Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Waldo Q. Flores, who issued the Malacañang order on May 26, shot down her defense. He said Republic Act No. 6713, the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, was clear on the need for officials to declare the assets and business interests of their spouses as well.

"The fact that the respondent's spouse is deceased is of no moment," the Palace said.

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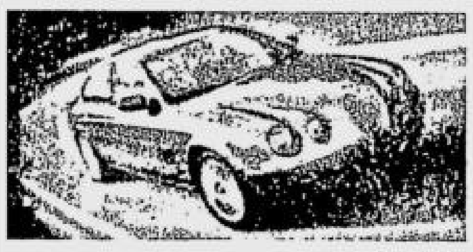

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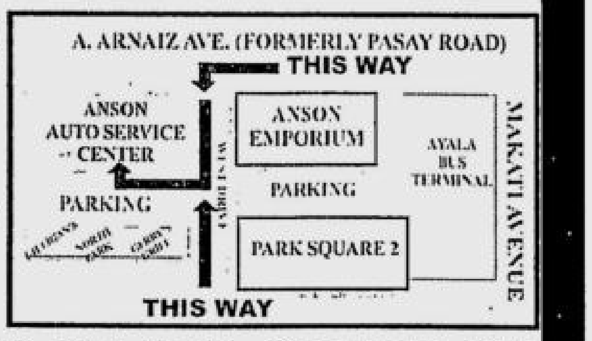

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Plot to attack US before polls bared

ISLAMABAD—Al-Qaida operatives captured in Pakistan were plotting terrorist attacks aimed at influencing the US presidential elections in November, a senior Pakistani intelligence official said Tuesday.

One of the top operatives had been contacted by al-Qaida's chief Osama bin Laden as recently as last year, but the elusive figurehead was not involved in the fresh terror plots, the official said.

The terrorist network was looking to pull off major attacks in the United States, Britain or Pakistan in the run-up to the polls but its capacity has been crippled by recent arrests in Pakistan, said the official.

"The network was looking to strike a major blow ahead of the elections. Al-Qaida was looking to strike in the United States or its chief allies Great Britain and Pakistan," said the official, asking to remain anonymous.

"The period before the US presidential elections was very critical," said the official, who has played a key role in a crackdown against Al-Qaida in Pakistan over the past month which has netted over 20 suspected operatives.

The alleged head of a British-based Al-Qaida cell, Abu Eisa Al Hindi, who was arrested last week after a tip-off from Pakistan, was probably involved in the plots against the United States, said the official.

Information extracted by Pakistani investigators from Al-Qaida suspects detained in recent weeks has led to a spate of arrests in Britain and caused a major terrorism alert in the United States.

Most of the information came from 25-year-old Pakistani computer whizz Naeem Noor Khan, who was arrested in a house near Lahore airport on July 12, said the official.

"The arrest of Naeem Noor Khan opened up a floodgate of information," he said.

Khan's computer files contained detailed photos and surveillance records of key financial institutions in New York, Newark and Washington as well as London's Heathrow airport.

His capture led to the July 25 arrest of a Tanzanian suspect in the 1998 East Africa US Embassy bombings, Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, another key terror planner in Osama bin Laden's network.

"This group in Pakistan was in close contact with the network in Britain, run by Abu Eisa Al Hindi," the official said.

"Al Hindi was probably helping in targeting the United States." Ghailani had met bin Laden in 2002 and received a message from him in 2003.

"Khalfan (Ghailani) said he had a contact with Bin Laden, some two years ago. We have another information that OBL sent a message to him sometime in June last year. But Khalfan has not met him since 2002," the official said.

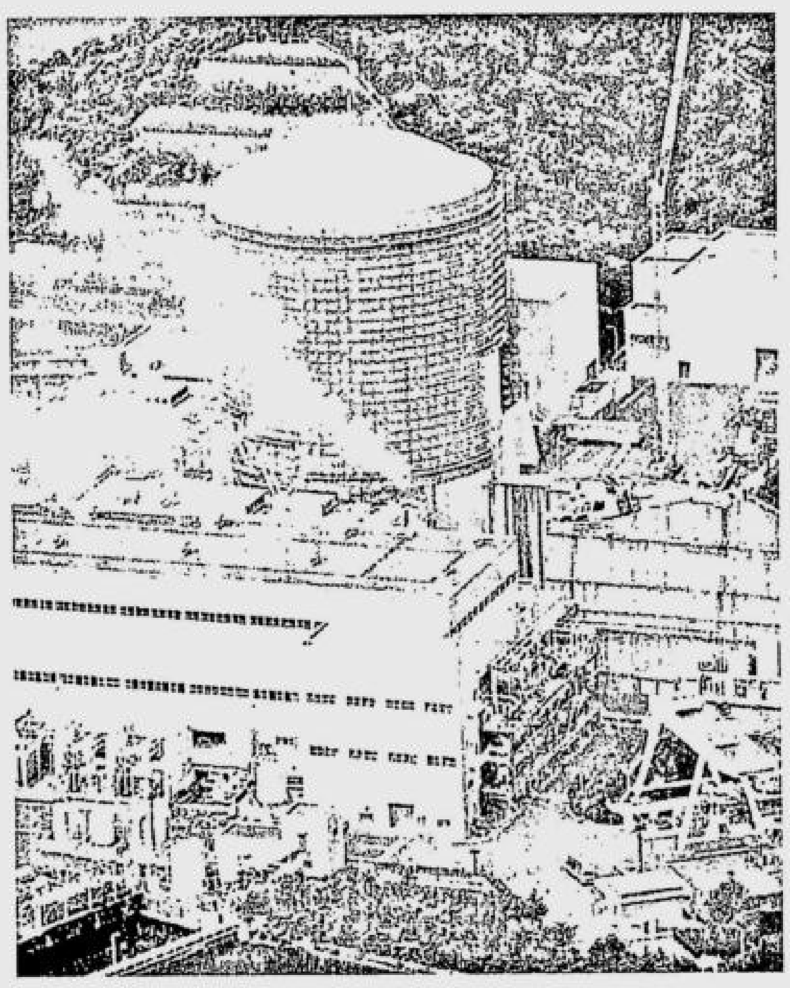
Ghailani had turned up in Pakistan's northwest tribal district South Waziristan some time last year, the official said. He had disappeared after the US indicted him in December 1998 over the east Africa bombings.

He fled Pakistani army raids earlier this year and headed east.

"He took part in skirmishes against Pakistan army and moved out of Waziristan sometime in June," the official said.

He was found living in the crowded eastern industrial town of Gujrat, which straddles the busy Great Trunk Road between Islamabad and Lahore, renting a house with two South African al-Qaida suspects and several women and children.

While in Gujrat Ghailani had been training suicide bombers to attack high-profile Pakistani figures at Islamabad airport and the nearby Chaklala air force base, investigators have said. *AFP*



A HELICOPTER hovers near the No. 3 reactor of the Mihama Nuclear Power Plant in Mihama, Japan, Tuesday one day after a steam leak from a cooling pipe killed four people and injured seven others in the nation's worst nuclear plant accident. AP

Nuke accident in Japan blamed on faulty pipe

MIHAMA, Japan—The faulty cooling pipe at the center of Japan's deadliest nuclear power plant accident had not been inspected since 1996, despite a warning last year that it was a safety threat, the plant operator said Tuesday.

The dangerously corroded pipe—which carried boiling water and superheated steam—burst at the Mihama reactor on Monday, burning to death at least four workers and injuring seven others, two of them seriously. No radiation was released, officials said.

The announcement came as dozens of police agents and nuclear energy officials arrived Tuesday at the plant in Mihama, about 320 km west of Tokyo, to investigate operator Kansai Electric Power on suspicion of negligence resulting in death.

The accident and suspected lapses deepened concerns about the safety of Japan's 52 nuclear plants, which supply about a third of the country's electricity. Two workers died in a radiative leak at a plant northeast of Tokyo in 1999.

It was unclear how the accident would affect the operation of Japan's other nuclear plants. The country's nuclear agency was considering a call for all plants to inspect their cooling pipes, a spokesperson said.

Kansai Electric deputy plant manager Akira Kokado said private contractors conducting inspections for the company notified management in April 2003 that the cooling pipe at the Mihama plant was overdue for a thorough safety check.

Sections of the pipe were last checked in 1996 and deemed safe at that time, said Koji Ebisuzaki, Kansai Electric's chief manager for quality control. Last November, the plant scheduled an ultrasound inspection of the pipe for Aug. 14—next Saturday. *AP*

Cuba's Castro turns 78

HAVANA—Cuban President Fidel Castro turns 78 on Friday striving to roll back creeping capitalism in the socialist society he built from a guerrilla revolution in 1959.

The world's longest-serving Communist leader has belied forecasts of his demise since the collapse of the Soviet Union deprived the Carib-bean island of billions of dollars in subsidies and plunged its 11 million people into economic hardship.

"Fidel, like his country, has continued to defy the odds," said Canadian historian and Cuba expert John Kirk, a professor at Dalhousie University in Halifax.

"Still remarkably lucid at 78, despite slowing down noticeably, he clearly remains determined to stay around and protect the revolutionary legacy of Cuba," Kirk said.

Ten summers ago, angered by shortages and long power cuts, Cubans took to the streets, smashed shop windows and looted central Havana stores in an unprecedented outburst of unrest.

Castro, dressed in his trademark green uniform, showed up in a military jeep to quell the riots with his charismatic presence. Cubans, who had been shouting against the government minutes before, began chanting "Viva Fidel."

Castro released simmering social pressures by letting tens of thousands of Cubans take to sea in flimsy rafts bound for the United States.

Also in response to the economic crisis, from 1993 he reluctantly allowed limited private enterprise and legalized the US dollar to ease economic hardship, while opening up Cuba to tourism and foreign investment. *Reuters*

Newer leaders may be filling higher positions in al-Qaida

WASHINGTON—A new portrait of al-Qaida's inner workings is emerging from the cache of information seized last month in Pakistan, as investigators begin to identify a new generation of operatives who appear to be filling the vacuum created when leaders were killed or captured, senior intelligence officials said Monday.

Using computer records, e-mail addresses and other documents seized after the arrest of Mohammed Naeem Noor Khan last month in Pakistan, intelligence analysts say they are finding that al-Qaida's upper echelons are being filled by lower-ranking members and more recent recruits.

"They're a little bit of both," one official said, describing al-Qaida's new midlevel structure. "Some who have been around and some who have stepped up. They're reaching for their bench."

The new picture emerged from interviews with two officials who have been briefed on some of the details of the intelligence and analytical conclusions drawn from the information on computers seized after Khan's arrest. But they did not identify the more senior al-Qaida leaders, and they said it was not yet clear to what extent Osama bin Laden still exercised control over the organization, either directly or through his chief deputy, Ayman Zawahiri.

The new evidence suggests that al-Qaida has retained some elements of its previous centralized command and communications structure, using computer experts like Khan to relay encrypted messages and directions, often encrypted, from senior leaders to subordinates in countries like Britain, Turkey and Nigeria.

In the past, officials had a different view of al-Qaida. After the American-led war in Afghanistan, most American counterterrorism analysts believed that the group had been dispersed, was on the run and had been trying to regroup in a loosely affiliated collection of extremist groups.

The arrest of Khan continued to be debated on Monday in the capital. A Democratic senator, Charles E. Schumer of New York, asked the White House to explain how the identity of the communications expert arrested in Pakistan last month became publicly known.

Schumer said in a letter to Condoleezza Rice, the national security adviser, that the disclosure of Khan's capture may have complicated efforts to combat terror.

"I believe that openness in government is generally the best policy," Schumer wrote. "But the important exception should be anything that compromises national security. The statements of the British and Pakistani officials indicate that such a compromise may have occurred." *New York Times*

TURKISH officials search for evidence after a bomb attack in Sultanahmet, Istanbul. AFP

Radical cleric vows to press fight vs US troops

NAJAF, Iraq—Militant cleric Muqtada Sadr, whose Shiite militia has been battling US forces across Iraq, warned that he would fight "until the last drop of my blood has been spilled," in his first appearance since the violence began.

The five-day-old uprising by al-Sadr's Mahdi Army began to affect Iraq's crucial oil industry, as pumping to the southern port of Basra—the country's main export outlet—was halted because of militant threats to infrastructure, an official with the South Oil Co. said Monday.

About 1.8 million barrels per day, or 90 percent of Iraq's exports, move through Basra, and any shutdown in the flow of Iraq's main money earner would badly hamper reconstruction efforts. Iraq's other export line—from the north to Turkey—is already out of operation.

Clashes intensified around Basra, where a British soldier was killed and several others wounded in fighting with militia near the cleric's office Monday, the British Ministry of Defense said. Three militants were killed and more than 10 others wounded, a senior Iraqi police official said.

In the holy city of Najaf, the main scene of fighting, US forces tried once more to drive militiamen out of a sprawling cemetery, and an American tank rattled up to within 400 meters of the Imam Ali Shrine, Najaf's holiest site, which fighters have reportedly been using as a base.

Clashes continued in the cemetery Tuesday, US tanks were seen heading to the area followed by sounds of explosions. Driving through the city's main streets, US troops called upon militants to give up their arms.

"We ask residents to cooperate with the Iraqi Army and police," said a voice in Arabic through a loudspeaker. "There will be no truce or negotiations with terrorists."

While US and Iraqi forces were trying to quell the eruption of Shiite violence, attacks by Sunni Muslim militants persisted around Baghdad: A roadside bomb detonated as a US military vehicle drove on a street in central Baghdad Tuesday, slightly injuring two soldiers, the military said. On Monday a suicide car bombing targeting a deputy governor killed six people, and a roadside bomb hit a bus, killing four passengers.

The US military also said a US Marine was killed in action Sunday in the western province of Anbar, a hotbed of Sunni militancy. The death brought to at least 927 the number of American troops who have died in Iraq.

An insurgent group warned in a videotaped message it would launch a campaign of attacks on government offices in Baghdad, telling employees to stay away. Al-Sadr's militants also kidnapped a top Baghdad police official and demanded that their comrades in detention be freed.

In the city of Nasiriyah, 305 km south of Baghdad, militants raided the local office of interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi's Iraqi National Accord party, set it on fire and warned party members to leave the city, an assault captured on video obtained by Associated Press Television News.

One of the attackers in the video denounced Allawi as "subservient to the occupation." There were no injuries in the Sunday night attack, said police Capt. Haydar Abboud.

Al-Sadr's vow to keep fighting was a defiant challenge to Allawi, who visited Najaf on Sunday and called on the Shiite militants to stop fighting.

"I will continue fighting," the young, firebrand cleric told reporters in Najaf. "I will remain in Najaf city until the last drop of my blood has been spilled."

"Resistance will continue and increase day by day," he said. "Our demand is for the American occupation to get out of Iraq. We want an independent, democratic, free country."

US President George W. Bush said Monday that coalition forces were "making pretty good progress about stabilizing Najaf." *AP*

Blasts rock Istanbul; two killed

ISTANBUL—Simultaneous explosions rocked two hotels in tourist areas of Istanbul early on Tuesday, killing two people and injuring up to 10, in what the city's police chief said was an apparent "terrorist" attack.

Turkish television pictures showed emergency services carrying casualties, mostly foreigners, to waiting ambulances at the scene of one of the blasts. Glass and debris lay scattered on the street.

Separately, two bombs exploded at a storage complex for liquid petroleum gas in an outlying area of the city, causing damage but no casualties, state-run Anatolian news agency quoted a company official as saying.

Police said two people were killed at the Pars Hotel in Laleli district, an area near major tourist sites and also popular with Iranian and east European traders.

CNN Turk said 10 people were injured in Laleli and at the other hotel blast in the historic Sultanahmet district.

"These appear to be a terrorist attack," Istanbul police chief Celalettin Cerrah told state-run Anatolian news agency.

Iranian trader Siamak Jihani, 54, said he was fast asleep at the Pars Hotel when the blast ripped through a room two floors below him at around 1:40 a.m.

"There was a really loud explosion and the room shook," he said, his foot bandaged after he cut it on broken glass. "The corridor was filled with smoke. It was a scary experience."

Anatolian said one of the dead as 31-year-old Haydar Baydar from Van in eastern Turkey and the other as Mahdi Pooliki from Iran. It said seven were wounded—two Dutch citizens, two Chinese, a Ukrainian, a Turk and a Turkmenistan national.

Officials at police headquarters declined to give details.

Istanbul, Turkey's largest city and commercial capital, has been targeted repeatedly by bomb attacks in recent years.

There was no claim of responsibility for the latest blasts, but Kurdish militants, far-leftists and radical Islamist groups have all carried out bomb attacks in the city. *Reuters*

Time reporter ordered jailed for CIA leak

A FEDERAL judge in Washington held a reporter for Time magazine in contempt of court on Monday and ordered him jailed for refusing to name the government officials who disclosed the identity of a CIA officer to him.

The magazine was also held in contempt and ordered to pay a fine of $1,000 a day.

The judge, Thomas F. Hogan of US District Court, suspended both sanctions while Time and its reporter, Matthew Cooper, pursued an appeal, but the judge firmly rejected their contention that the First Amendment entitled journalists to refuse to answer a grand jury's questions about confidential sources.

"The information requested," Hogan wrote, "is very limited, all available means of obtaining the information have been exhausted, the testimony sought is necessary for completion of the investigation, and the testimony sought is expected to constitute direct evidence of innocence or guilt."

The ruling came in a politically charged investigation into whether members of the Bush administration illegally disclosed the identity of an officer for the CIA.

The subpoenas for Cooper and other journalists were issued by a special counsel, Patrick J. Fitzgerald, who was trying to learn who told Robert D. Novak, the syndicated columnist, the identity of an undercover CIA officer, Valerie Plame. Plame is married to Joseph C. Wilson IV, a former diplomat who asserted in a July 6, 2003, Op-Ed article in The New York Times that President Bush had relied on discredited intelligence when he said, in his 2003 State of the Union Address, that Iraq had sought to acquire uranium from Africa.

New York Times

US solon wants media leak probed

WASHINGTON — A US senator asked the White House to explain how and why the name of an al-Qaida informant was leaked to the press, amid concerns it had hurt the war on terror, a letter from the lawmaker showed on Monday.

A Pakistani intelligence source said on Friday that US officials confirmed the name of captured al-Qaida suspect Mohammad Naeem Noor Khan while he was still cooperating with Pakistani authorities as part of a sting operation against Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network, thereby compromising his cover.

"I respectfully request an explanation to me and any other member of Congress who might wish one of who leaked this Mr. Khan's name, for what reason it was leaked, and whether ... reports that this leak compromised future intelligence activity are accurate," Sen. Charles Schumer, a Democrat from New York, wrote in a letter to White House domestic security adviser Frances Townsend on Aug. 8.

A copy of the letter was obtained by Reuters on Monday.

Reuters

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3. For your succeeding entries, simply text WEST<MTCN (Last seven digits only)>/<TRANSACTION AMOUNT>/ and send to 2966 for Globe/Touch Mobile subscribers or 3996 for Smart/Talk & Text/Addict Mobile subscribers. Ex.: WEST 1082680/5000
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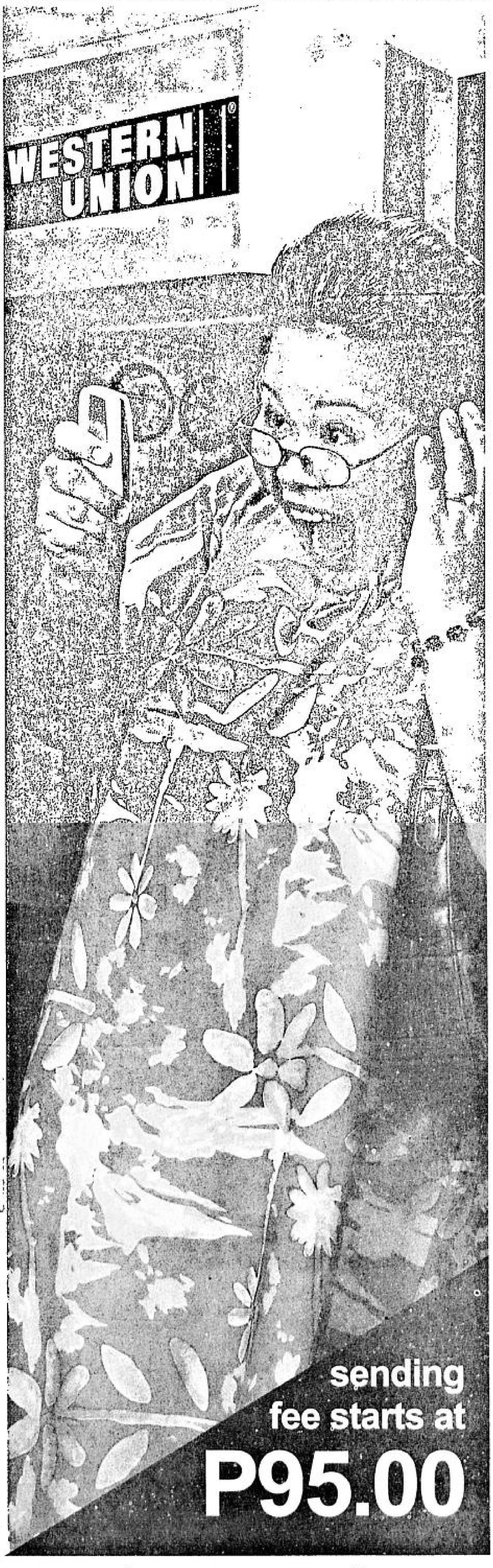

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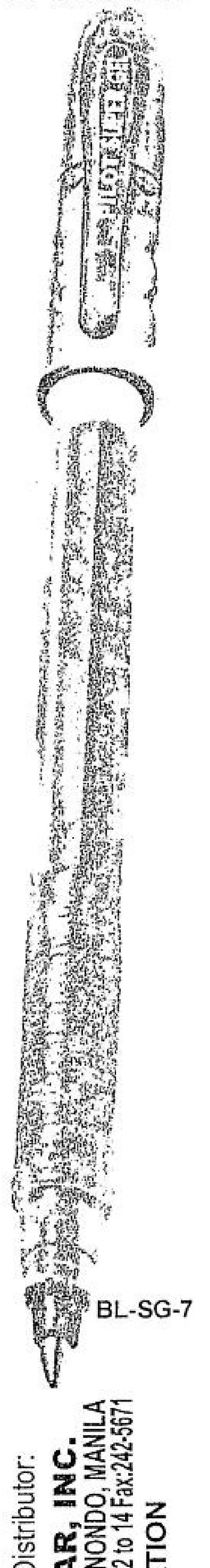

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US federal agents to check all passengers on helicopter tours

NEW YORK—Federal security officers will take over the screening of all passengers on helicopter tours in New York City, after learning that suspected al-Qaida operatives in Pakistan had photographs, a brochure and other information about the tours.

A security directive issued by the Transportation Security Administration orders federal screeners to begin doing passenger inspections at the city's three heliports, a job now done by private security contractors, Mark Hatfield, a spokesperson for the TSA, said Monday. Passengers will be subject to the same types of searches for weapons, explosives and suspicious items as are now in place at airports.

The helicopter tour operators will also be required to provide the names of passengers to the federal government to run against federal "no-fly" lists of terrorist suspects and to provide names and data on their own employees for federal background checks. The operators will also have to name a security coordinator who would be available 24 hours a day to respond to federal inquiries.

While federal officials have imposed broad safety measures on the aviation and rail industries since the Sept. 11 attacks, the move to tighten security at New York's heliports marks the first time that they have imposed these types of stepped-up measures at specific sites because of a perceived threat. Officials said they plan to redeploy federal screeners from other sites to the New York heliports by the end of the week.

As it stands right now, almost no regulations regarding security procedures exist for the operators of tourist and charter helicopters in New York City, several industry officials said Monday.

"It's basically kind of voluntary right now," said Michael Renz, the owner and chief executive officer of Analar Corp., a corporate charter company, in Princeton, N.J. "There's no guidelines for us at the moment."

Many helicopter companies adopted certain measures on their own after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Renz said. Although his company does not make passengers go through a metal detector, employees now check passengers' luggage before they board and will sometimes call up a special hotline linked with the Newark, N.J., office of the FBI to check passengers' names against terror watch lists, he said.

"If someone's calling us out of the blue, and they want to see Manhattan, and they have some funny-looking name, we check it out," he said.

New York Times News Service

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GSX 2.0 GAS A/T	847,000	100,000	64,430	44,378	35,261	25,279	20,626	17,688
GLX 1.8 GAS A/T	807,000	100,000	60,812	41,886	33,283	23,861	19,469	16,695
GL GAS	698,000	100,000	50,953	35,095	27,893	19,997	16,316	13,988
DLX GAS (15.08%dp)	663,000	100,000	47,788	32,915	26,162	18,756	15,303	13,119
DLX GAS (50%dp)	663,000	331,500	27,625	18,465	14,684	10,518	8,575	7,291
DLX DSL	690,000	100,000	50,230	34,597	27,497	19,713	16,084	13,789

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VARIANT	SRP	DP	12	18	24	36	48	60
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RAV4 4x4 (50%dp)	1,238,000	619,000	52,797	36,348	28,874	20,682	16,862	14,352
RAV4 4x2 (9.82%dp)**	1,018,000	100,000	79,897	55,031	43,718	31,342	25,572	21,934
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Olympians

EDITORIAL

THE WORLD waits with great anticipation for the opening of the 28th Olympiad in Athens on Friday. Despite the increasingly heavy commercialization of the Olympics since the 1980s, the Olympic spirit—of peaceful competition and the transformation of national pride into a means for fostering international amity—endures.

The world has suffered many blows to peace and peaceful coexistence since the last Olympics. The aggressive and often bullheaded policies of the United States have fractured many old alliances and shaken others; arousing indignation against the unilateralist tendencies of the American scheme of things. And yet, just as the world has defiantly rallied around the United Nations and more vigorously pursued collective measures of peacekeeping and conflict resolution, so has the world kept faith with the Olympic spirit.

The glitzy ads and massive marketing campaigns cannot erase the sense of community that will engulf the world as virtually every nation of the world pauses to watch their delegations march in the opening ceremonies. Even we, Filipinos, will all smile collectively when we see our (as usual) official-heavy and athlete-light delegation march carrying the Philippine flag.

While every Olympics, in which we see more potbellied government officials marching than actual athletes, has served as a reproach to our sports priorities, each nevertheless offered the hope that in future Olympics, things change for the better. We may not be record holders in terms of medals won, but in each and every Olympiad, we are—for a brief, happy moment—firmly part of the community of nations, a global family that always aspires for something more than military power or economic influence.

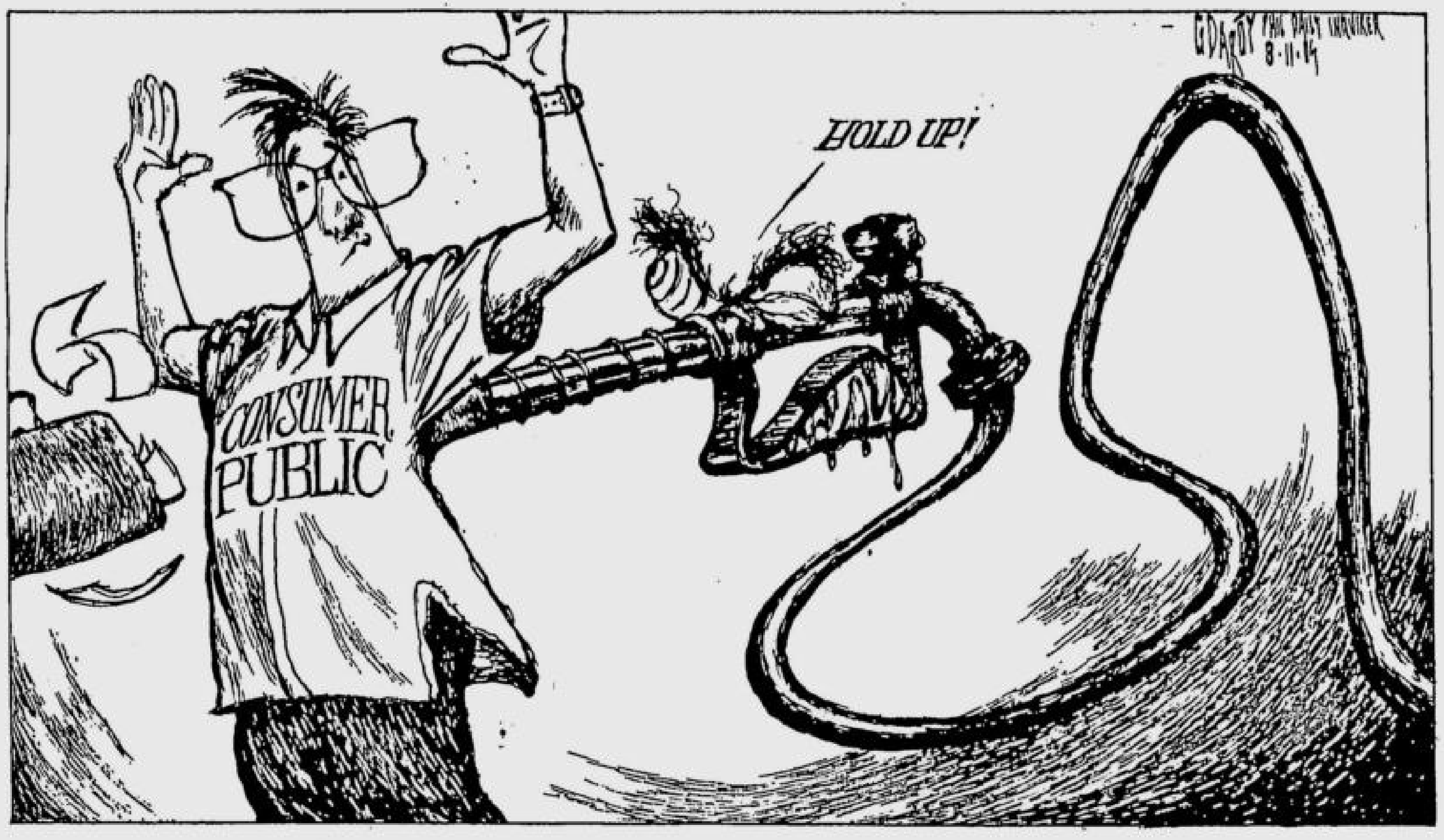
It may be too much for us to hope against hope, for the time to come when we will win medals in unexpected fields of competition. But it is not too much to expect that time will come when our sports authorities will focus less on awarding million-peso bounties for medals, and instead focus more on investing our public funds in programs that genuinely benefit our athletes.

Anyone visiting the Rizal Memorial complex will see our athletes ill-clad, ill-fed and ill-housed. The Ultra Complex, originally meant for them, has never been put to our athletes' use; worst of all, our athletes do not get the nutrition and equipment they deserve and need. In this, they are not different from the rest of our society, which must make do when a few with connections or their own money have a head start.

Our few Olympic athletes will surely feel envy at the First World amenities enjoyed by some of their competitors, and even envy the socialist benefits of some of their Third World peers. Yet we know, as our Olympic athletes have told us in the past, that despite these differences, the athletes themselves all get consumed by the Olympic spirit during games. Cultural exchange becomes a reality; friendships are born; romance even flourishes. Competition is generally held within the bounds of propriety, and a sense of honor and decorum prevails.

In the end, it is this that the world enjoys, particularly the many nations of the world with slim hopes of winning medals. The chance to walk side by side with all the other nations. The chance to meet and learn. The pleasure and privilege of competing in arenas defined by tradition, honor and the finest sense of sportsmanship. These are things that humanity yearns for in so many fields of human endeavor. And while it may be only for a few weeks every four years, at least the world gets to see and savor a way of life that may not be, but which can exist. If not now, then some day.

On the day the games are proclaimed to begin, in the city that is the cradle of the democracy we so cherish, we reaffirm our belonging to a common humanity, and our having aspirations that surpass the selfish dreams of empires and kingdoms. The Olympics belong to all humanity, just as the shadows of the noble columns of ancient Greece will fall on the representatives of millions who still dream the dream of liberty that was born in the heart of ancient Athens.



Higher fuel tax will affect prices of everything

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHAT? Raise the tax on oil when the world market price is also rising? And by two-thirds of the present tax, or P2 per liter in addition to the present average of P3, for a total of P5. What foolishness is this?

This only shows the selfishness and greed of this government. It shows utter lack of sensitivity to the plight of the people who are already bearing the brunt of the soaring prices of basic services and commodities, and who will also end up paying for the tax increases.

Other governments who care for their people will remove or lower taxes to cushion the effect of rising prices, but this government cares only for itself. It sees only that the government needs more money, but it does not see that the people—among the lowest paid in the region—need money even more.

Rep. Joey Salceda, supposedly the "in-house economist" of the House of Representatives and a leading candidate for chair of the ways and means committee, said that "we might have no choice in this case but to bite the bullet." You can bite it and chew it as much as you want, Mr. Congressman, but you can't make the people bite that crap.

He said the choice is either to increase either the oil tax or the value added tax rates.

"A VAT increase will impact on the whole range of goods and services affecting both rich and poor, while a petroleum tax is less regressive," Mr. Salceda said. A fuel tax is "not exactly antipoor," he added.

He said his study found that 96 percent of the country's fuel consumption and transport fares were borne by "families with income above minimum wage."

And they call this guy an "economist"? And he made a study, *pa kuno*?

Anybody lucky enough not to be an economist knows that an increase in the price of fuel will impact on all goods and services, the manufacture or delivery of which use transportation and electricity—that means practically everything.

You think a higher tax on imported crude oil will be paid only by the oil companies? Of course not. The oil companies will pass it on to the consumers.

A tax on the rich, such as a higher tax on vehicles, especially the expensive ones, may be justified (it may even improve traffic in urban areas); but a higher tax on fuel is very regressive and oppressive. Because the fuel tax the companies pay will have a chain effect on everything: from transportation fares to the prices of rice and fish, vegetables, school supplies, house rent, clothes, even agricultural products and electricity. Many of these don't use oil-based fuel, but nevertheless they have to be moved from farm to market. It will have an effect not only on the oil companies and their gas stations but on all stores, including of the sari-sari variety.

It will affect not only the rich but even the very poor—those who earn not only below the minimum wage but even those who earn nothing at all because they also have to eat. Even squatters have to take transportation and buy food. Even farmers, who raise their own food and have their feet and carabaos for transportation, have to buy other needs, such as clothes, whose prices are affected by fuel prices.

One doesn't have to be an economist to know these.

Salceda said our pump prices are lower than those of other Asian countries. Maybe. But their citizens also have higher wages and higher standards of living.

I am not saying that we should increase the VAT rates instead. I say that we should not increase nor impose new taxes at all until this government shows sincerity in cutting down on its own extravagant expenditures and stopping graft and corruption, by which it throws to waste billions of taxpayers' money. I think the government has no moral right to impose additional taxes until it improves the collection of existing ones. I think Congress has no moral right to pass new tax measures until it abandons its very wasteful and immoral pork barrel system. I think it is downright immoral for legislators to increase taxes without reducing their own excessive allowances. Legislators are now fighting over the committee chairmanships because the allowances for these committees are many, many times more than that of their legal salaries.

A *padre de familia* who does not earn enough will tell his family to cut down on expenses. With the budget deficit, this administration is expected to cut down on expenses, too. But what does it do? It is going to submit an even bigger budget to Congress. And the House has already promised to pass it even before it has seen it. Where will they get the funds for the bloated budget? From us, of course! We pay, they spend.

This administration is almost bankrupt. Still, it is rushing headlong into Charter change for which we will waste billions of pesos on an exercise that is not urgent. We can change the Constitution later, when we can afford it, but not now. This Constitution has served us for a number of years; it can serve us for a few years more. It is not perfect, yes (no constitution is) but it can be improved later. There is no urgent need to waste money we don't even have yet. The only urgent thing is that time is running out on some ambitious politicians who want to become prime ministers before they become too old.

What can we taxpayers do if the administration insists on increasing taxes? Do what people have done throughout history to stop abuse: Wage a tax revolt. And kick out the present politicians in the next elections.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: Vice President Noli de Castro is my neighbor and when I saw him out on the street, I asked him why he rejected being head of the DSWD.

"Alam mo," he replied, *"akala ko ang DSWD ay radio station. Hindi pala."*

Friendships

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

A FRIEND of mine who has just come from the US tells me some of the Filipinos there are deathly scared for their jobs. They do not just have to worry about the layoffs that have been ravaging workplaces over the past years, they now have to worry about being singled out for firing first. That is because of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's decision to pull out our contingent from Iraq. It's not just Jay Leno who has had some very interesting things to say about it, other Americans do.

"The discrimination is real," one Filipino says. "Some American employers think it is their patriotic duty to punish Filipinos for the betrayal."

Well, whether real or not, the perception of Filipinos being brave in words but not in deeds can't possibly improve their status in a land that already presumes a great many of them to be cowardly fugitives from the law, or TNTs. Malacañang may imagine things haven't changed since we pulled out our troops from Iraq, it's still business as usual, but what it has in mind and what reality has in store are two different things.

It is a reminder yet again that GMA cannot pursue globally a policy she has pursued nationally: Which is to plunge headlong into a commitment and not have to honor it. Which is taking a reckless action and not having to face the consequences. Which is to lie and expect the world to forget about it.

Let us be clear: Of course, GMA did the right thing to pull out our troops from Iraq to save Angelo de la Cruz. But that is only so because our troops had no business being there in the first place. We had no business joining the war in the first place. That pullout has consequences, however. It can't just end there, with GMA being free to tell the world rest assured nothing has changed, we still belong to the so-called "coalition of the willing."

Everything has changed. Burying our heads in the sand isn't going to keep things the way they were. We have in fact only two courses of action left to us, as I've argued in a couple of columns. One is for GMA to reaffirm our belief in George W. Bush's war on Iraq and apologize profusely for bowing down to terrorists' demands, vowing it won't happen again—if her word still counts for anything. The other is for her to pull us out of that war completely, questioning its wisdom, and putting our relations with the world on a new footing. We can't have it both ways. We can't remain with the "coalition of the willing" without having to pay its price, which is giving up a piece of the bodies of the Angelo de la Cruzes of this world for a piece of the action. And we can't put this country's relations with the world on a new footing without rejecting that war.

GMA did say late last week that no Filipino president could break RP-US ties. Well, why in God's name would any Filipino president want to? If we can have ties with a country like Albania, why can't we have ties with a country like the United States of America? The point is not to break RP-US ties, the point is to break our status as a vassal of the US. Which is what those ties have really meant, especially under GMA. You don't have to break this country's ties with Washington, but you don't have to break this country's spirit either.

In fact, no Filipino president in postwar Philippine history, not even Ramon Magsaysay or GMA's own father, Diosdado, has done more to turn back the hands of time and turn this country back into a commonwealth of the US than GMA. That's where we've been over the past years, GMA using 9/11 here, as Bush did in America, to justify the unjustifiable. That's been my running beef with the ex-pillars of civil society who joined her government; the fact that they never raised a voice to protest the nation's descent into a banana republic, which was what the "strong republic" really was. A banana-hood that reached its height with the welcoming of American troops into this country, which was accompanied by an entire rhetoric about our innate helplessness and need for help from America to solve our problems. No other sovereign country since the War has more proudly trumpeted its dependence and willingness to trade patrimony for a pot of porridge.

No, we do not need to break RP-US ties, but we do need to revaluate them. The frosting of those ties does not just give us a compelling reason to do so, it offers us an excellent opportunity to do so. We do not need to break our ties with America, but we do need to redefine them in the context of our own interests, chief of them the welfare of our overseas Filipino workers in the Gulf. We do not need to break our ties with America, but we do need to redefine them in the context of solidarity with the peoples of the world, not least with the growing number of Americans who are protesting the obscenity of what their president has done. We do not need to break our ties with America, but we do need to regain our bearing and our dignity, without which no ties with America or with any other nation of this world can ever be possible or meaningful.

Spain pulled out its troops from Iraq, too, and Bush berated its government, too, for "rewarding terrorists." But Washington hasn't broken ties with Jose Luis Zapatero's government, nor is it likely to. Indeed, if our own history has anything to teach us, it is that friendship is never bought with slavishness, it is earned with the willingness to fight for what one believes in. People who can be expected to jump when threatened or offered blandishment will never be taken seriously. They will always be used as a doormat. Respect is earned through principled disagreement, not through unthinking assent. Employers and servants, masters and slaves, conquerors and vassals can never be friends.

Only free men, and nations, can.

Assassin's line of fire

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE KILLING of Jonathan Abayon, reporter of GMA radio station, belabors the point that the Philippines is one of the world's most dangerous places for mediamen.

The statistics are grim. Fifty-four have been killed since 1986. Of these, five were killed this year, so far. Last year the toll was seven. We are next to Colombia—where there is a raging war between the government and drug lords—as the most unsafe place to live for journalists.

It's safe to assume two things: first, most of the slain Filipino journalists fell by gunfire, which reflects the prevalence of the gun culture in our country; and, second, they died while performing journalistic duties (the way they saw fit, such as exposing corruption). Easily ignored is the fact that most of the victims were provincial journalists—which means that community media people are more vulnerable to all sorts of pressure (most notably violence and threats of violence), than their metropolitan fellows.

To say that the Philippines is, next to hell, the hottest spot on earth for journalists is wrong accent. It does not explain anything. What the rising toll underscores is that journalists engage in the most risky occupation for making a living—not only in the Philippines, Colombia and Iraq—next to soldiers, policemen and even paramedic staff in war fronts.

This is the reason why insurance companies are not keen on selling policies to journalists and write waivers as stringent as those against suicide and calamities, like earthquakes and wars. But there is another reason for classifying journalists as insurance "high risk." Actuarial figures show that there is among journalists a high rate of alcoholism, which makes them vulnerable to liver diseases and cardiac attacks, ailments that have claimed more lives than job-related violence.

In the Philippines, more journalists have died at the hands of assassins than from covering the Muslim wars in Mindanao, the campaign against the Abu Sayyaf and the continuing guerrilla war with the New People's Army. In the Iraq war, the number of journalists killed in the thick of battle and from insurgent attacks on occupation forces has been high, and is rising. There, they take casualties despite being "embedded" inside the protective armor of the Humvee and armed personnel carrier.

In the Philippines, journalists are not embedded inside anything—neither by the army nor by the national police. They are embedded inside the constitutional guarantees of freedom of the press, the sanctuary of their domicile, their media offices. But the constitutional guarantee is not a shield of armor. It is an implicit guarantee which depends for its fulfillment on the respect that citizens—especially those offended by exposés of wrong-doings—accord to the notion of press freedom and on how they understand the importance of disclosure and the public's right to know in a vibrant democracy.

But assassins, like the bodyguard of pugilist Manny Pacquiao and those of politicians and crooks exposed by zealous journalists, have little idea about the connection between a disclosure-driven press and democracy. And so, until this notion is understood by those who use guns for hire, we should expect more journalists to die at the hands of assassins.

Obviously, the increasing number of journalists killed has not deterred Filipino journalists from conducting investigations. It should be clear by now that the police cannot stop the rising tide of assassinations. And journalists would be deluding themselves if they expect that the ritualistic pronouncements from the authorities—prodded by fresh assassinations—would make it safe for them to do their job.

Journalists are like soldiers and policemen in that they are aware that their jobs have occupational risks. But the difference is that soldiers and policemen are armed and trained to defend themselves and to kill. Journalists are not. They are not combatants. If they were, there would be a legitimate reason to kill them.

In a knee-jerk reaction, PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane has proposed to arm journalists to protect themselves. His proposal gave all the wrong reasons and could bring the worst consequences. Ebdane's proposal reflects typical police mentality—fight violence with violence. But journalists are not law enforcers. At best, they are whistle blowers, which make them hated by those who have things to hide. This calls to mind how the press lord, Lord Northcliffe, defined news. News, he said, is telling the public what officials, including crooks, don't want the public to know.

It is this pursuit of news that puts journalists on the line of fire of assassins. It is what motivates them despite the risks. Arming them does not protect them from assassins who lurk in the dark. The formula of the armed cordon has not worked for John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul—all victims of assassins. A firearms ban—as proposed by Nandy Pacheco's "gunless society"—can help to reduce gun-related violence, but only up to a point. If Pacquiao's bodyguard had no gun, it may be argued, the heated exchange between him and Abayon may have led to mayhem, but no worse than fisticuffs.

Assassinations highlight another problem—armed bodyguards. Hiring bodyguards reflects the failure of the law enforcement to exercise its monopoly over the means of violence required to protect law-abiding citizens and maintain public order. This monopoly, law enforcement agencies have surrendered to bodyguards who are not even deputized as law enforcers.

In the meantime, it's best for journalists to be aware that when they put themselves in the service of public interest, they put their lives on the line. They should expect no thanks from the public. "Crusading" is a thankless job. It can end in crucifixion.

'Machos' of Pasong Tirad

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONE of the sites for a "stand-upper" in this coming Thursday's "INQUIRER TV" (8 p.m. on ABC-Channel 5) is a street not far from the INQUIRER offices in a part of Makati known as "Pasong Tirad."

The segment is on the "*Tanong ng Bayan* (The People's Question)" for the week: "*Uubra ba ang one-woman policy sa machong Pinoy?* (Will the one-woman policy work for the macho Pinoy?)" Our director took us to shoot the scene in Pasong Tirad mainly because of the droves of men who usually congregate there, a fitting backdrop to a feature on "machos."

Even if it was already late in the afternoon, the "machos" were there all right, a long line of them waiting to be summoned into the offices of a labor recruiter who had openings for jobs in Iraq. We had stumbled into a virtual barangay of once and future Angelo de la Cruzes.

They had more in common with "Ka Ilong" than just a shared dream. "Most of us are from Pampanga, provincemates of Angelo and GMA!" they declared proudly. When asked if they weren't scared of meeting the same fate as their province mate (the kidnapped worker, not the President), to a man they replied: "Better to be kidnapped there than to die of starvation here." Besides, one of them said, "if I get kidnapped, I'll even end up with a house and lot and a job here, with my family!" "That's if you're released!" I kidded back.

They were so cooperative and pleasant about the entire thing—dutifully following our young female director's orders to avoid looking at the camera and to look as "macho" as they could—that I actually felt a pang when our shoot wrapped up. "I don't know if I should wish you luck," I told them. "Maybe I should just wish that you won't have to leave at all."

* * *

ACTUALLY, the men's outlook doesn't seem so grim. Their recruiter was deploying workers on behalf of a British firm with contracts in Iraq, and most of the job openings are inside military camps run by coalition troops.

At the time of De la Cruz's kidnapping, special envoy to the Middle East Roy Cimatu had cleared only the largest military camp, in the vicinity of the airport, as safe enough for the deployment of new Pinoy workers. I don't know if any more camps have been cleared since then, but folks with relatives in Iraq say the coalition camps are relatively secure places, though in a country as dangerous as Iraq, "secure" is a relative and meaningless term. Besides, wasn't Angelo supposed to be working in Saudi Arabia and had driven his truck to Iraq only because such risky assignments promise pay up to three times the normal rate?

Instead of being frightened off by Angelo's near-beheading, the men at Pasong Tirad, and many others despairing of a better life in this country, seem to find Iraq an even more desirable destination today. The De la Cruz incident and the outpouring of media attention has taught us lessons, all right, but the wrong ones.

* * *

ONE of the most touching parts of "Fahrenheit 9/11," Michael Moore's provocative documentary on post-9/11 manipulation of American public opinion and the "real" reasons for the invasion of Iraq, is his tribute to the "children of the poor" who make up the majority of the US soldiers.

Isn't it ironic, he said, that it is young men and women who belong to the poorest segments of American society, who benefited the least from its largesse, who are putting their lives on the line to save the American way of life? For putting themselves at risk, said Moore, all these young people ask is that they "not be put in harm's way unless necessary."

Substitute "military service" for "overseas work" and much the same could be said of the sacrifice paid by men—and women—like the friendly Pasong Tirad "machos." Though they have benefited little, if at all, from our society's largesse, it is they who will brave bullets and bombs, missiles and terrorists to find work where it is available and which pays best, if only to support their families and, incidentally, keep our economy afloat.

When the story on Angelo's abduction first broke, a diplomat waxed philosophical about the presence of thousands of Filipino workers in Iraq. "This is one of the benefits we have gained from being part of the Coalition of the Willing," he said. Well, according to American officials, we are no longer part of that Coalition, and the visa that allowed us entry to that exalted *barkada* has just been revoked.

But tell that to the men bound for Iraq. Tell that to the men lining up along the narrow streets of Pasong Tirad, with their hopes in hand and their papers clutched in brown envelopes and plastic folders. It isn't even hope that propels them. When I said I wished they wouldn't have to leave at all, many of them, especially the younger ones, smirked and remarked: "But there's nothing to stay for here."

Just like America's young soldiers, who sign up for military service knowing full well that it's the surest and fastest route to advancement, our overseas workers have long despaired of finding the fast-track to wealth on home shores. It's abroad where the opportunities lie, they have convinced themselves, and it's a perversion of the age that where dangers flourish most, that, too is where opportunities are most available.

* * *

IN LAST Friday's column on the privilege speech delivered by Rep. Nerissa "Inday Neri" Soon Ruiz, I mentioned that her stay in the House of Representatives was interrupted when she ran for mayor of "Mactan." I've been told that Inday Neri ran for mayor of Mandaue in 1998 against the winner Thadeau Ouano. I must add, Mayor Ouano has allowed the use of a lot owned by the city government for the construction of a center for women workers, with funding from Abanse! Pinay.

Linggo ng Wika and Filipino-English

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

AUGUST is a time for rainy days, flooded streets and *Linggo ng Wika*. If you walk around pre-school and elementary schools all over the country at this time, chances are you will find posters drawn by the children giving their ideas on why we should value and develop our national language. The children draw heroes of the late 19th-century and try to connect this with the national language. Frankly, I see no connection except that Jose Rizal is quoted almost like a mantra here, "*Ang hindi marunong magmahal sa sariling wika masahol pa sa hayop at malansang isda.*" Rizal is usually depicted wearing his black overcoat (in the tropics!) and holding two books (he actually published three: "*Noli Me Tangere,*" "*El Filibusterismo*" and the annotated "*Sucesos de las islas Filipinas*" by Antonio de Morga). Sometimes, he is shown furiously scribbling with a quill, when he actually used a metal tipped pen, feathers having gone out of style in the Middle Ages. On the other hand, Andres Bonifacio is shown in white *camisa de chino* and red pants that, we are told on good authority, were known as *kundiman* pants. He holds a *bolo* (he actually fought with a pistol) and a KKK flag. Unlike Rizal, he is an angry man and shouts things like "*Sugod mga kapatid!*" or "*Kalayaan.*" Anything but the greatest cuss word in the Filipino language that begins with "P." Nobody seems to mind that when the main characters of the Noli are drawn by schoolchildren, Ibarra looks like Rizal and Elias looks like Bonifacio. This is a sure-fire formula for confusion that children bring all their lives.

August is also a time to remember the outbreak of the Philippine Revolution in August 1896, but since that is overshadowed by Linggo ng Wika, the children still draw scenes of *Katipuneros* fighting the evil *Guardia Civil*. Sometimes, they draw scenes from Edsa I, complete with yellow confetti falling softly on the participants like a benediction. If this is the way children mark Linggo ng Wika, little wonder there is so much confusion out there regarding our country's language policy. With some well-intentioned people pushing for Filipino at the expense of English, and others emphasizing English to the detriment of Filipino, someone should stop and remind them that we have a bi-lingual language policy. Or has that also been thrown out? Why make these languages compete when they can very well co-exist and complement each other? Just looking at the way Filipino language has evolved over the past half century is quite engaging. We see things but rarely notice. If you stop and observe the language we speak and use in text messages, you will notice the way in which we move easily from one language to another, often producing that brand of Filipino humor that only we can understand and find funny. An example would be this text about names of newly born Chinese: TINA GO was born secretly. LINO CO was born swindled. ANDY LIM was born in the dark. BOB UY was born fat. EVA YAN was born different and KENNETH SY was born blind. Surely there is more out there that are not made up like the basketball player called "Magic Tiongson."

One wonders what Manuel Luis Quezon Sr. would think about the national language today. Would he be happy or sad in the way the language has developed from the time he made Filipino the national language. Perhaps Manuel Quezon III, who writes in this column space on other days, can tell us. But in 1921 Quezon delivered a speech stating his preference for English as an official language for the Philippines and related how and why he studied English:

"I remember when I first left the Philippine Islands in my trip to Russia—that was in 1909 and at the time I could only speak Spanish. From the time I landed in Hong Kong until I met the first Filipino in Paris, I could not understand anybody whom I met. And that trip made me learn English." Few people know that Quezon and T.M. Kalaw were probably one of the first Filipinos to take the Trans-Siberian Railway. Quezon continues:

"On one occasion I [entered a restaurant] and sat on table and intended to order some eggs. I picked up the menu and pointed at something in it. I thought it was eggs but they gave me fish. So I was right there and then convinced that if I want to eat eggs and not fish I had to learn English."

Quezon then says a few more things and concluded:

"It would be a source of satisfaction and pride on the part of the American people to know that the time spent here by the United States has not been lost, that something has remained and will remain in the Islands forever. It would appeal to the American nation to know that even after their flag has been pulled down that American institutions and American ideals have become the heritage of the Filipino people...So I say that the adoption of English as the official language of the Philippine Islands is a good means of securing Philippine independence." A decade later Quezon's tune would change and he would wish for a Philippines governed like hell by Filipinos rather than run like heaven by Americans. Sometimes I wonder whether we are now suffering what Quezon wished for. Didn't Teresa de Avila, saint and doctor of the church, warn us about what we wish for? She said that more tears are shed over answered prayers than unanswered ones. Reflect on it and weep.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Just kids

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

A FEW months back, right before Holy Week, I was at Harrison Plaza taking a breather at one stall, when my attention was caught by an obviously pirated DVD of Mel Gibson's "Passion of Christ" on display.

As I read through the package, the woman vendor whispered into my ear that she also had X-rated films. (Yes, it did occur to me, initially, as odd that the vendor had assumed that someone who would be interested in Gibson's film would also be looking for X-rated films.)

Without waiting for me to ask for the films, she eagerly brought out several of them, this time whispering, "*Mga bata, sir.*" I looked at the DVD covers and was aghast—they were indeed child porn films, mainly Japanese. My shock gave way to anger, and I just had to tell the vendor that the films were totally unacceptable. She smiled lamely, and put the stuff away.

I thought of writing about the incident but never got around to it. Then last week the papers featured Unicef's report on how serious a problem child pornography was in the Philippines.

There has been some outrage expressed but, by and large, public response, including that of the media, has been quite muted. The anemic response plus other recent developments makes me wonder if, perhaps, we Filipinos are actually ambivalent not just about child porn but also about the broader issue of pedophilia and sex with minors.

A Lolita culture?

Vladimir Nabokov's novel "Lolita," eventually made into a film, is about a middle-aged pedophile and his infatuation with a young girl (who, incidentally, isn't totally guileless and is able to manipulate her seducer).

I'm using the term "Lolita culture" to refer to entire societies that may actually consider sex with minors to be almost normal. In Japan for example, porno films play up fantasies of sex with schoolgirls, and department store announcers take on a squeaky little girl's voice because that's considered sensual.

We actually have some of that Lolita culture—just listen hard to some of our women when they want to be seductive and you'll see some of them do go into that little-girl voice. Notice, too, how we dress up little girls, their faces fully made up, and get them to dance *ocho-ocho*. Maybe, that's all innocent fun but my gut feel is that there is a Lolita culture to all this, much like those American beauty pageants where they get little girls to imitate older contestants.

There's more to this Lolita culture and a confusing mixture of values around children, families and sexuality.

On one hand, we deny the need to have sex education in schools, claiming this will corrupt the young. Yet, we also carry on with vestiges of older traditions that actually make the young sexually vulnerable. Remember that as recently as 1989, girls could get legally married at the age of 14, and that among Muslims and cultural minority groups, the law still allows marriage of girls as soon as they reach the age of puberty.

Even if we've raised the minimum age of marriage to 18, for both males and females, we're still ambivalent especially about adolescent sexuality. We fear that sexuality, yet some of our values and norms hold up that sexuality, especially that of girls, is a prize for men. Ironically, the notion of chastity, expressed in female virginity, ups the ante for younger girls, dangling them as the biggest prize in the male race for sexual conquests. Listen hard to the talk inside beer houses and you'll find, inevitably, jokes, even songs, about seducing and conquering young girls.

Male entitlement

The Lolita culture doesn't just draw from the machismo value of sexual conquest; even more dangerously, there are notions of patriarchal entitlement at work, of men thinking they have rights over young girls.

The most extreme form of patriarchal entitlement is that of men abusing their own daughters and young female relatives. But this perverse entitlement takes other forms, as in the cases of men (often with the consent of their wives) pimping for their daughters. Sometimes the daughters are directly sent into sex work; in other cases, they're brought to movie talent scouts, or to "promotions agencies" looking for "entertainers" to send to Japan. In all these cases, the daughters are expected to sell their bodies as part of their filial duty, to help support their families.

It's this sense of entitlement that tempts advertisers to test the waters in using young girls to sell male products, as in the Kinse Anyos (15 years) case, juxtaposing images of young girls and rum. If you're alert enough, you'll find other less blatant but even more disturbing examples. I've written about how very young children are sent out at night to tug at your heart strings to buy that sampaguita. Lately, I've also noticed how, in several parts of Manila, girls in their early teens are being fielded as well. You wonder why they have to have lipstick to sell sampaguita, and then realize that with the lips just a shade too red, and a gait where the hips swing a bit too much, these girls probably aren't just selling flowers.

And the child?

Let's link all this back to the more specific problem of child porn. The other week, the police raided a Laguna resort and were able to rescue several children who were said to have been recruited to perform for child porn films.

Several of the kids—the TV footage suggested they were prepubescent—were actually from Leveriza in Pasay City. That's the extent of parental neglect; kids aren't just roaming the streets in their neighborhood, or watching porn in someone else's house, but actually going off now to do porn.

No doubt, poverty comes into the picture, but I'd also say we need to look at how our cultural norms may be contributing to these problems. After all's been said about the Lolita culture and machismo and entitlement, the bottom line is that we put children in harm's way because we see them as *bata lang*, just kids, docile and resilient.

Given the current debates around family planning, I just have to add here that this "*bata lang*" mentality is also one reason why some couples have so many children. Why worry? The kids aren't extra mouths to feed, but extra hands, extra bodies to keep the family going.

Back in the 1980s pedophilia made national headlines in exposés on parents in Pagsanjan, Laguna, literally selling their sons to foreign pederasts. I remember talking to a Protestant pastor from that town, and he told me you could tell which families had sold their sons to the pederasts—their houses were better built.

We eventually passed laws to crack down on pedophiles and on the trafficking of children, but enforcement tends to be erratic. The Unicef exposé on child porn will get law enforcement agencies on their toes again, but the problems of child sexual abuse will keep recurring if we don't look into our own communities and homes and into our concepts of who a child is.

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Inutile law and law enforcers

LETTERS

THE INQUIRER recently featured a news item about Singapore's determined effort to clamp down on smoking by requiring cigarette-makers to put on the labels terrifying images of the bad effects of smoking. (PDI, 6/16/04)

Compare that with our own anti-smoking campaign. There are laws which, among others, prohibit smoking in enclosed public places like malls, restaurants and offices. These were welcome developments because the laws would spare non-smokers, who constitute the big majority of the population, the ill effects of second-hand smoking.

But lo and behold, these laws, like many others, are being violated openly everywhere. Local officials and the police, who are the ones mandated to enforce the law, and business owners who have a big say in their implementation, are not lifting a finger to protect the health of the citizens. In one very popular mall, there are no "No Smoking" signs, and cigarette butt receptacles are all over, as if the mall owners had not heard about the law. Some establishments even provide ashtrays on their tables!

Who do we turn to to stop this madness? Many countries are now in the second and third levels of the anti-smoking campaign. Ours have not even gotten off the ground. If we cannot enforce a simple smoking ban in enclosed public places, what are we, Filipinos, capable of?

—**GABRIEL MARQUEZ,**
Calamba, Laguna

Population: women's rights issue

I AM concerned about how House Bill No. 16 has made population its central issue. The bill seeks to provide information and services on reproductive health care to arrest the growth rate of our population, not to allow women to exercise the right to choose whether and when to have children. Its preferential incentive on scholarships for children of families with two children discriminates against poor children belonging to larger families.

The bill mistakenly presumes that all kinds of abortions are hazardous. Clandestine abortion is unsafe and dangerous, but safe and legal abortion is not. An abortion performed under proper conditions is even safer than childbirth.

The bill also makes it a point to maintain the illegality of abortion under the Revised Penal Code. It fails to recognize that the illegality of abortion does not lessen the incidence of abortion but only makes it dangerous for women. It also fails to recognize that, having ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Philippines is bound to remove punitive provisions imposed on women who undergo abortion.

Dangerous pronouncements have also been made, such as the statement of Rep. Ace Barbers to deny free health care services to women who have more than two children to discourage multiple births. This places poor women's health and lives at risk. A clear illustration of how widely accessible health care services save lives is the fact that, in the United States, only eight women die out of every 100,000 live births while, in the Philippines, 240 women die out of every 100,000 live births.

On the other hand, the Catholic Church hierarchy's stand against modern contraceptive methods is not new at all. The Church can say all it wants but the duty of the government is to provide access to information and services on the full range of contraceptive methods regardless of what the Catholic Church hierarchy professes.

Catholic women around the world—including more than 60 percent of Catholic women in Trinidad, Tobago and Botswana, and 28 percent in the Philippines—have used contraceptive methods, showing that Catholic women exercise freedom of conscience. What we need is a reproductive health care policy that assures access to information and services for all women regardless of their religion and the number of their children.

—**CLARA RITA A. PADILLA,**
executive director,
EnGendeRights, 801B New York
Mansions, 84 Montreal St.,
Cubao, Quezon City

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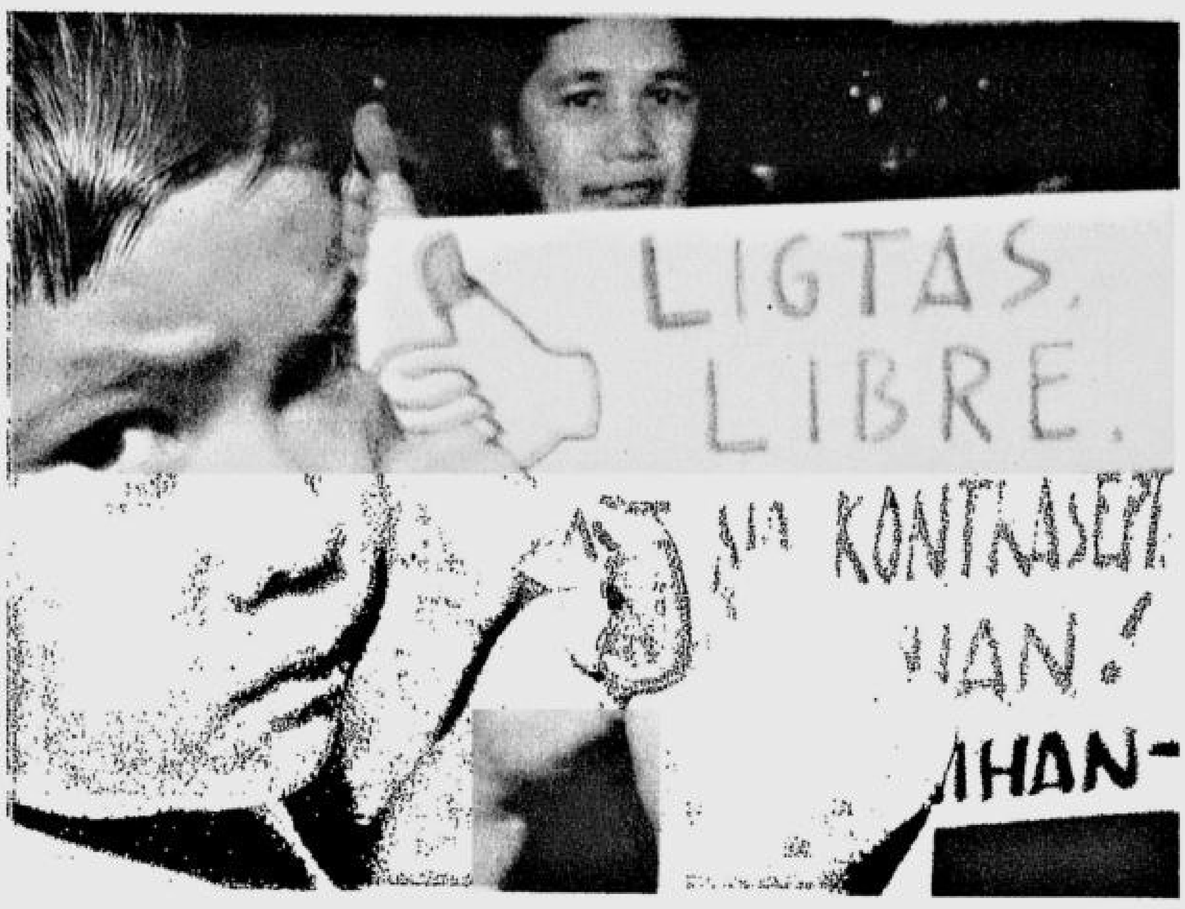

Family planning improves life

THE WAVE of opinions stirred up by the family planning issue can only do more good than harm.

Whatever else might be said about Rep. Edcel Lagman's recent bill proposing a two-child policy, it at least underscores the reality that family planning not only saves lives. Family planning improves lives.

According to the Department of Health, about one in every six pregnancies end up in abortion, mainly because these are either unwanted or unplanned.

Giving the public access to family planning information and services can help prevent unwanted or unplanned pregnancies that end up in abortion, especially in cases of teenage pregnancy.

Beyond the medical or health issue, family planning can empower women and men (men have family planning needs, too) to live healthy, productive and fulfilling lives with the number and spacing of the children that they aspire for.

The government and the private sector should get its act together and help every couple exercise the constitutional right to responsible parenthood.

—**ALBERT LEE,**
alblee@wave.com.ph,
38 St. Vincent St.,
Villa España Subd., Tatalon,
Quezon City

Lessons from Conrad

I HAVE been an avid reader of Conrad de Quiros' column "There's the Rub." I particularly like his column humbly sharing his recent experience with hospitalization. (PDI, 8/2/04) First and foremost, I would like to say that I admire his ideas and brilliance. Oftentimes, I feel like reading my ideas in his column, although sometimes I disagree with him. But he is one of the best columnists this country has. May he recover completely soon. I, too, learned a lesson from his experience. It is true. We are never in control of our life no matter how hard we try to plan it.

—**LORELYN G. TURTOSA,**
2010-C, A. Linao St.,
Paco, Manila

Make the children read

NO matter how you teach children grammar, syntax, spelling or whatever, you would fail miserably in your effort unless you compel them to read books. Short stories by Rafael Sabatini, Jack London or mysteries by Ellery Queen, Mills and Boon paperbacks and, later on (much, much later on), tomes like War and Peace, would be very useful and productive. Never mind that if at first, they can't make heads or tails of the words or sentences, but if they persist, despite the obvious absurdity of their attempts, they will get the hang of it all and finally find themselves speaking and writing English in a manner that is syntactical, grammatical and correctly spelled.

—**BENNY LEOFANDO,**
Quezon City

Pork barrel and IRA expenditures should be made more transparent

I THINK that the members of both chambers of Congress are not inclined to agree with the belt-tightening proposals, especially those asking to realign the pork barrel. Fact is, many of our leaders don't have political will to adopt the proposals.

Right now the only win-win compromise is to let both the congressmen and senators submit a quarterly report to the people, showing how they spent their pork barrels. Local governments must also be required to submit a report on how they disbursed their internal revenue allotment. Their reports could be published free by all newspapers. A journal may be an alternative, which can be reviewed upon request by the taxpayers.

I hope that our "progressive" legislators will initiate this move, so that they won't be suspected of funding the Communist Party of the Philippines, instead of helping their constituents.

—**ERICK SAN JUAN,**
S1402 1st e-Bank Tower, 8737
Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

Wrong way of protecting prison inmates' children

THIS is regarding the news story, "Minors now banned from Bilibid prison," which appeared in the INQUIRER's July 9 issue.

The administrators of the National Bilibid Prison have banned children below 18 years of age from visiting relatives in prison. They said this is to protect children from being influenced by and exposed to the negative habits, vices and violence inside the prison; or from being taken as hostages in the event a riot breaks; or from being used in smuggling illegal substances (hidden in milk cans and baby diapers).

We know that the NBP administrators mean well in protecting the welfare of children. However, by adopting such measure, they are violating a right. It is not only the "safety and psychological well-being" of children that are important as they grow up but also knowing who they are, and who their parents are.

Article 8 of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child or the Preservation of Identity states that, "The State has an obligation to protect, and if necessary, reestablish basic aspects of the child's identity. This includes name, nationality and family ties."

It would be unfair for the child not know his/her parents while growing up. There could also be some negative psychological effects if they would get acquainted with their parents only after they turn 18 years old or when they are already adults. It is also unfair for the prisoners. It is only their freedom that has been taken away from them, not their parental rights.

As to the illegal substances, these would still circulate among the prisoners even if there were no children being used as innocent carriers. The NBP administration should think of another way of preventing the smuggling of illegal substances into the prison without trampling the rights of children.

The negative habits, vices and violence inside the prison are brought about by the miserable and unproductive living conditions of the prisoners. Aside from the meager food and pest-infested quarters that the prisoners must suffer, there are not enough facilities and programs for their recreation, rehabilitation and reeducation that would enable them to cope with prison life and prepare them to be productive citizens after their release. In such conditions, stress builds up, resulting into anti-social acts and violence inside the prison.

Reforming the prisoners' recreational activities and living conditions might help them change for the better and also enable them to enjoy and fulfill their parental rights.

—**CARLOS C. PADOLINA,**
secretary general, Salinlahi
Foundation Inc., Alliance for
Children's Concerns, 90 J.
Bugallon St., Bagumbuhay,
Proj. 4, Quezon City

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Wednesday, August 11, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Forum on "International Marketing & Rights Selling"
by Book Development Association of the Philippines

1:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
The MIBF - MSA Little Math Wizards 2004 Eliminations, Levels 1 & 2

Thursday, August 12, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Public Forum on "Networking for Survival: A Sharing of Consortial Experiences" by Phil. Asso. of Academic & Research Libraries

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Forum on "Media Technology: Effective Utilization in Teaching"
by UPSLAA

4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Forum on "Cost Efficient Book Printing"
by Book Development Association of the Philippines

Friday, August 13, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.
The Big Leap "Challenge of Publishing Quality Textbook for Pre-school, Elementary, High School & College"by C & E Pub., Inc.

6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
Book Launching by St Pauls

Saturday, August 14, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Forum on "Parental Involvement in Early Literacy (Family Literacy)"
by Philippine Normal University in cooperation with the Reading Association of the Philippines

1:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Translation Seminar by Philippine Bible Society

6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
National Book Awards by Manila Critics Circle

Sunday, August 15, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Art Workshop by Art is Kool

2:00 P.M. - 300 P.M. Awarding Ceremonies
by A-Z Direct Marketing, Inc.

FUNCTION ROOM B

Wednesday, August 11, 2004
1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Bayani" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Bayani" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

FUNCTION ROOM B

Thursday, August 12, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Forum on "Prescribed Lifestyle the Way to Live Life"
by Medical and Health Librarians Association of the Philippines

1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Pahina" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Pahina" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

4:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.
Forum on "Printing Books on Demand" by Fuji Xerox

6:30 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.
Golden Crayon Awards by Phoenix Educational Systems, Inc.

Friday, August 13, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN.
Film Showing "Hiraya Manawari" and "Detek Kids" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Forum on "Creating a World-Class Environment in the Library" by Association of Special Libraries of the Philippines

4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Forum on "Editorial Management" by Book Development Association of the Philippines

Saturday, August 14, 2004
1:00 P.M - 7:30 P.M.
National Quiz Bee sponsored by Philippine Booksellers Association, Inc.

Sunday, August 15, 2004
10:00 A.M. – 12:00 NN
Book Launch of "Woman, Religion and Spirituality In Asia" by Anvil Publishing, Inc.

1:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
The MIBF - MSA Little Math Wizards 2004 Championship Round, Levels 1 & 2
The Joys of Reading Essay-Writing Contest Awarding Ceremonies

6:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.
Book Presentation of "In the Light of Truth" by Stiftung Gralsbotschaft

ACTIVITY AREA 1

Aug 11 & 12, 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. - Storytelling by Museo Pambata
2:30 P.M.- 3:30 P.M - Storytelling by Museo Pambata
Aug 13, 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. - Storytelling by Museo Pambata
2:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.- Artistry and Crafts by Museo Pambata
Aug 14, 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. - Storytelling by Museo Pambata
3:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. - Face Painting, Storytelling, Kite Making by Adarna Publishing
Aug 15, 1:00 P.M.- 2:00 P.M. - Storytelling by Museo Pambata
2:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. Artistry and Crafts by Museo Pambata

ACTIVITY AREA 2

Aug 12, 11:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. - Flower Arrangement by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation
3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M. - Candle Making by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation
Aug 13, 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. - Basic Art and Animation Workshop by Mowelfund Film Ins.
4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.- Balloon Design Workshop by Filstar Distributors Corp.
Aug 14, 10:30 A.M. - 12:30P.M - Landscaping Workshop by Cornerstone Garden
1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.- Basic Art and Animation Workshop by Mowelfund Film Ins.
4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. - Lego Robotics by Felta Multi-Media Inc.
Aug 15, 11:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. - Reflexology Workshop by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation

ACTIVITY AREA 3

Aug 12, 1:00 P.M.- 3:00 P.M. - Balloon Design Workshop by Filstar Distributors Corp.
Aug 13, 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. - Dishgarden and Terrarium Making by Cornerstone Garden
Aug 14, 11:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. - Basic Hair Cutting by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation
Aug 15, 1:00 P.M.- 3:00 P.M. - Balloon Design Workshop by Filstar Distributors Corp.
3:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M. - Storytelling by Alitaptap Storytellers Club

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

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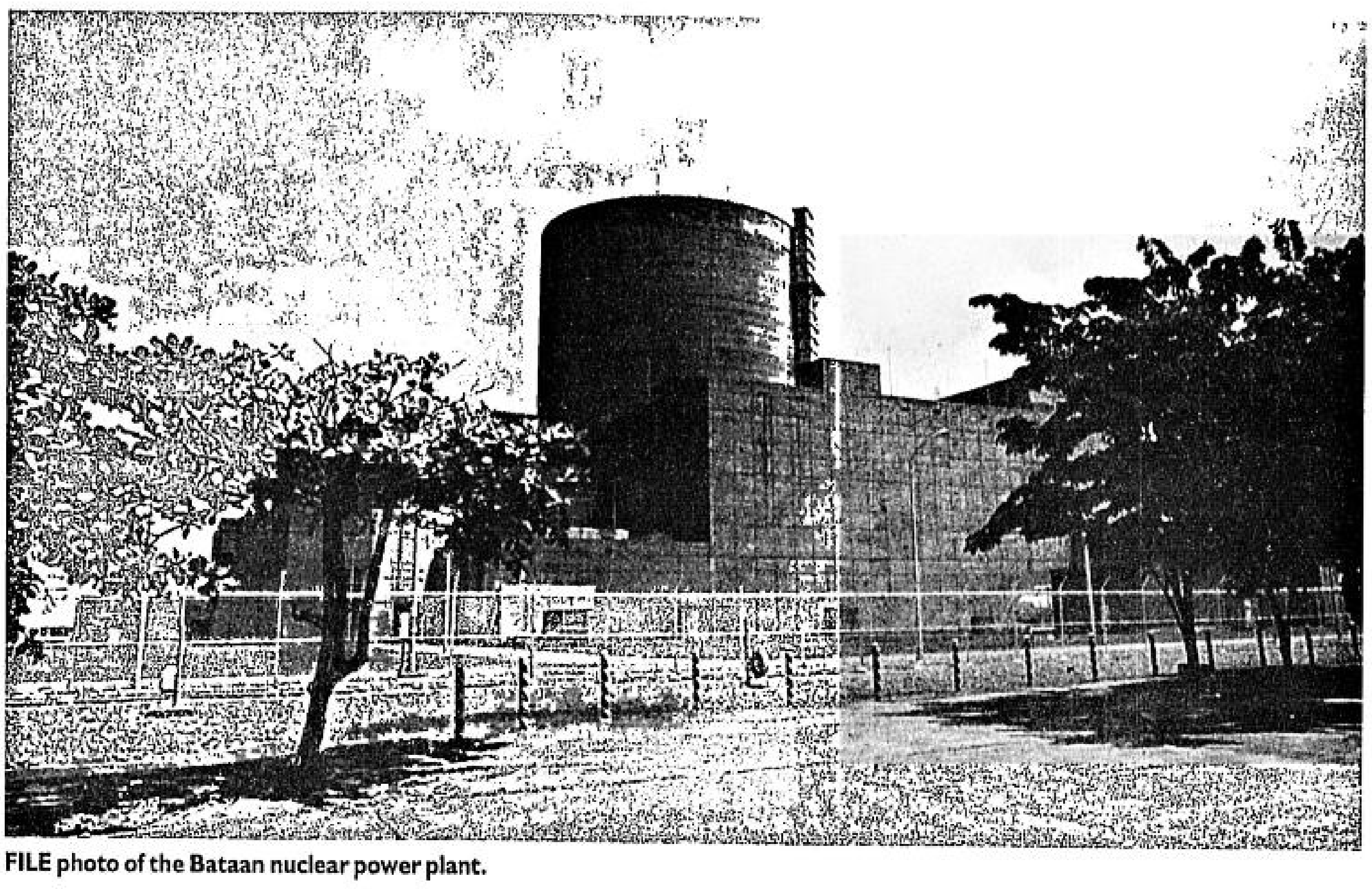
No takers for Bataan 'nuke folly'

By Tonette Orejas
Morong, Bataan



FILE photo of the Bataan nuclear power plant.

EUGENIO Paran, project manager of the Bataan nuclear power plant, was no clairvoyant. But as late as September 2000, when the National Power Corp. was three months away from the December deadline in the disposal of the BNPP assets, Paran saw the fate of the country's first nuclear energy facility at Napot Point in Morong, Bataan.

"We advertised for the sale of the major nuclear equipment in the Nuclear News (an American magazine) in 1998 but there were no takers? We really cannot dispose of the plant. We don't see any takers in the near future," Paran said.

The haste with which it was built, which took five years, did not match the slow pace of the disposal phase. This ate up 14 years.

As the deadline went past, the BNPP had several unsold assets. These included the one-reactor nuclear power plant and its conventional component (or the balance of plant) worth $384.5 million. This was barely a quarter of the $2.1 billion loan obtained by the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos to build what Sen. Joker Arroyo called "nuke folly."

There have also been no takers for spare parts worth $19 million, serviceable materials worth P25 million and unserviceable heavy equipment and vehicles worth P6 million, Paran said.

No considerable money could be raised because the value of the equipment, already vintage by now, had gone down over the years. For example, two steam generators, valued at $50 million each, were being bought for only $1.5 million each.

All that the BNPP team managed to raise were P37.8 million between 1997 and 1999 from the sale of unserviceable materials, equipment, vehicles and scrap metal.

The uranium, which originally costs $75 million in 1984, was sold for only $25.8 million in 1997.

Two 501 F gas turbines, part of Westinghouse's $100-million out-of-court settlement, were sold for only $58.3 million between 1998 and 1999, reports from Paran showed. (The National Power Corp. in 1996 offered these to bidders of the 1,200-megawatt gas-fired power plant in Ilijan, Batangas.)

Debts

While the succeeding administration tried to raise as much cash from BNPP assets, the debts and the interests that the project incurred were virtually killing Filipino taxpayers even as they did not get a single watt of electricity from the nuclear plant.

The government spent at least P46.4 billion to pay BNPP debts between 1986 and 1998. It shelled out another P1.94 billion for the operations of the BNPP caretaker team, the Freedom from Debt Coalition said.

"Financial hemorrhage" is what the BNPP and the people behind it had caused taxpayers, the FDC pointed out. It said that until 2018, the country would have to bleed an additional P11.2 billion to settle the BNPP debts.

Like the Aquino administration that fought but just the same honored the BNPP debts and later accepted the $100 million out-of-court settlement from Westinghouse over fraud cases, the 11th Congress had also not stopped the bleeding.

In 2000, it slashed the revenue share of local governments and the budget of several critical public agencies but maintained the P2.32-billion debt service for the BNPP. The succeeding Congress did not change the trend.

This, even as lawyers Rene Saguisag and Sedfrey Ordoñez, then the presidential legal counsel and solicitor general, respectively, of the Aquino administration, not only called the debts for the BNPP the single biggest foreign loan incurred during the Marcos regime but was also the "biggest loan anomaly as well."

Conversion

The Department of Energy had dangled the idea of converting the 620-megawatt BNPP into a 1,500-megawatt gas-fired facility as early as 1996 as part of the 30-year Philippine Energy Plan until 2025.

At one time, Napocor revealed plans that apart from using natural gas from the Camago-Malampaya field in northwest Palawan, it would also use liquefied natural gas as fuel for either the BNPP or for the Ilijan project.

The Australia-based consultancy firm Metts Pty. Ltd. said the conversion was "technically possible, but economically unwise."

"New and dedicated coal or natural gas-fired power plants would give much higher efficiencies and this would give the Philippines much better value per peso spent on fuel consumed," the study by Metts said. It recommended that the nuclear plant be operated as a nuclear facility, saying that the reactor had been maintained in good condition.

At one point also, the converted BNPP was seen as a ready market for the output of the $5-billion Camago-Malampaya gas project.

It was the Estrada administration that knocked off plans to convert the white elephant that has become out of the BNPP. It did not end the debt question, though.

"If it was left to me, I would prefer to blow it up because it serves as a monument of shame. Why perpetuate something that is giving us so many problems?" the late Ramon Mitra, then president of the Philippine National Oil Co., said. He was part of the inter-agency committee on BNPP conversion.

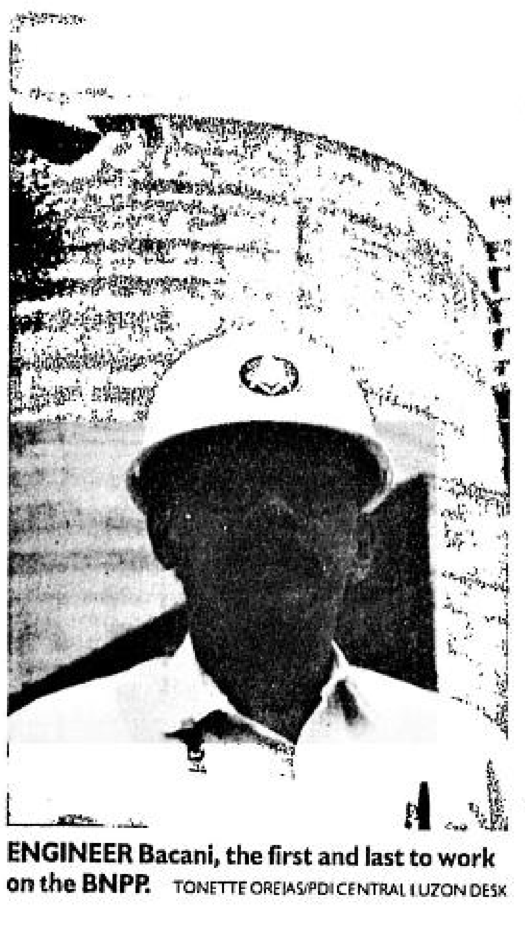
The conversion prospect has not died, resurrected last week by President Macapagal-Arroyo. And again, the Malampaya project is tied to the BNPP's conversion.

Will she or will she not make the switch is not the end of the question. More importantly, will the economist in her continue to honor the BNPP debts amid a P200-billion budget deficit? Will she be the real taker, the one who will really put everything to rest, including the debt burden springing from the BNPP?

For Reynaldo Bacani, the first and last BNPP chief nuclear engineer, the plant's only function now is like a lighthouse to fisherfolk on Bagac Bay.

For Ed Garcia, a bus driver plying the Balanga-Bagac route, everything about the 370-hectare complex that he passes daily was about how the government wasted money.

"Napasara naman kaya lang sayang ang pera no (It was eventually closed but the money spent for that facility had gone to waste, right)," he said.



ENGINEER Bacani, the first and last to work on the BNPP. TONETTE OREJAS/PDI CENTRAL LUZON DESK

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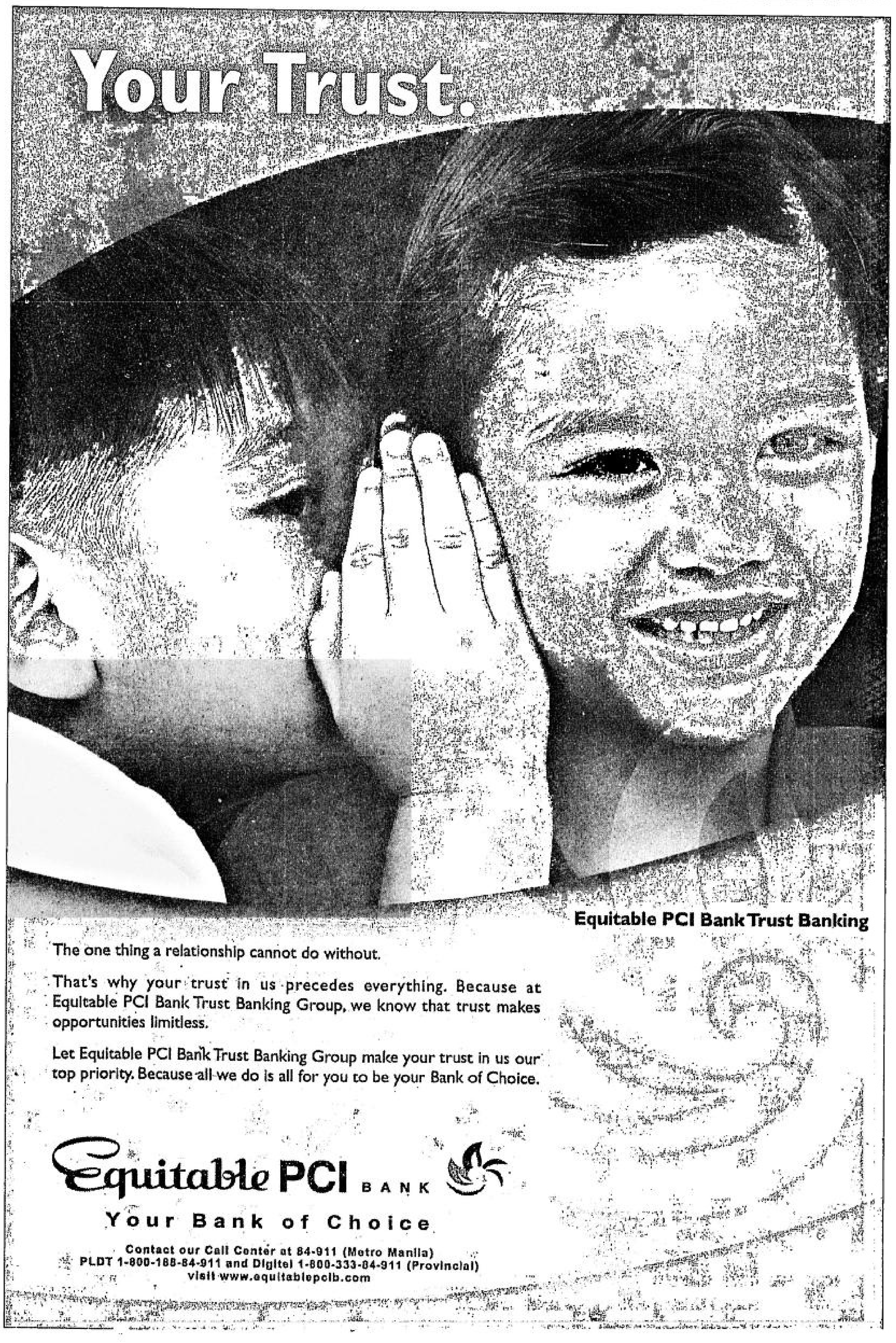

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Judge in Kalinga shot dead in Tabuk

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A regional trial court judge in Kalinga was gunned down as he and his wife stopped to buy bread in a bakery in Tabuk town on Monday night.

Police said Judge Milnar Lammawin, 51, of the RTC Branch 25 in Tabuk died of at least 18 bullet wounds in the body, four of which hit him in the head.

Lammawin, elder brother of Tabuk Mayor Camilo Lammawin, was shot at close range by at least two men while he was waiting for his wife, Venus, who bought bread in a bakery on Magsaysay Avenue in Tabuk. The attack happened between 6 and 7 p.m., reports said.

Lammawin was taken to the Almora General Hospital, also in Tabuk, but doctors failed to revive him. He was declared dead at 8:43 p.m.

Police were looking into Lammawin's recent cases to find a lead into the motive behind his murder. Reports said the judge was handling cases involving heinous crimes.

Lammawin became judge at 39 years old, making him the youngest judge in Kalinga, known for its bloody tribal wars.

Lammawin's colleagues in Cagayan Valley described Lammawin as soft-spoken and a dedicated judge.

"(Judge Lammawin) is a God-fearing, honest and soft-spoken judge and a known dedicated public servant. Because of his death, he leaves a large void in the judiciary," said Isabela Judge Juan Bigornia Jr.

Lammawin was the second judge to be killed in three months. On June 10, Tanauan City Judge Voltaire Rosales was driving his car on his way home to Alabang after attending a hearing when an unidentified gunman on board a motorcycle shot him several times in Barangay Dos, Tanauan, Batangas.

He died while doctors were trying to revive him inside the emergency room of a local hospital. Rosales' death was brought to national attention and prompted President Macapagal-Arroyo to order an investigation and immediate resolution of all murders of judges in the country.

On July 17, anti-kidnapping agents arrested a suspected member of a kidnap-for-ransom group being linked to the killing of Rosales.

Chief Insp. Florendo Saligao, Tanauan police chief, said members of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (NAKTF) arrested suspect Macario "Mike" Galicia, inside his residence in Barangay Pantay Matanda, Tanauan City at around 8 p.m. Recovered from his possession was an M-16 Armalite rifle, Saligao said.

Saligao said Galicia, an alleged member of the Galicia Group, a notorious kidnap-for-ransom and highway robbery gang in Batangas, was arrested for a series of criminal cases that include murder, robbery and illegal drugs charges.

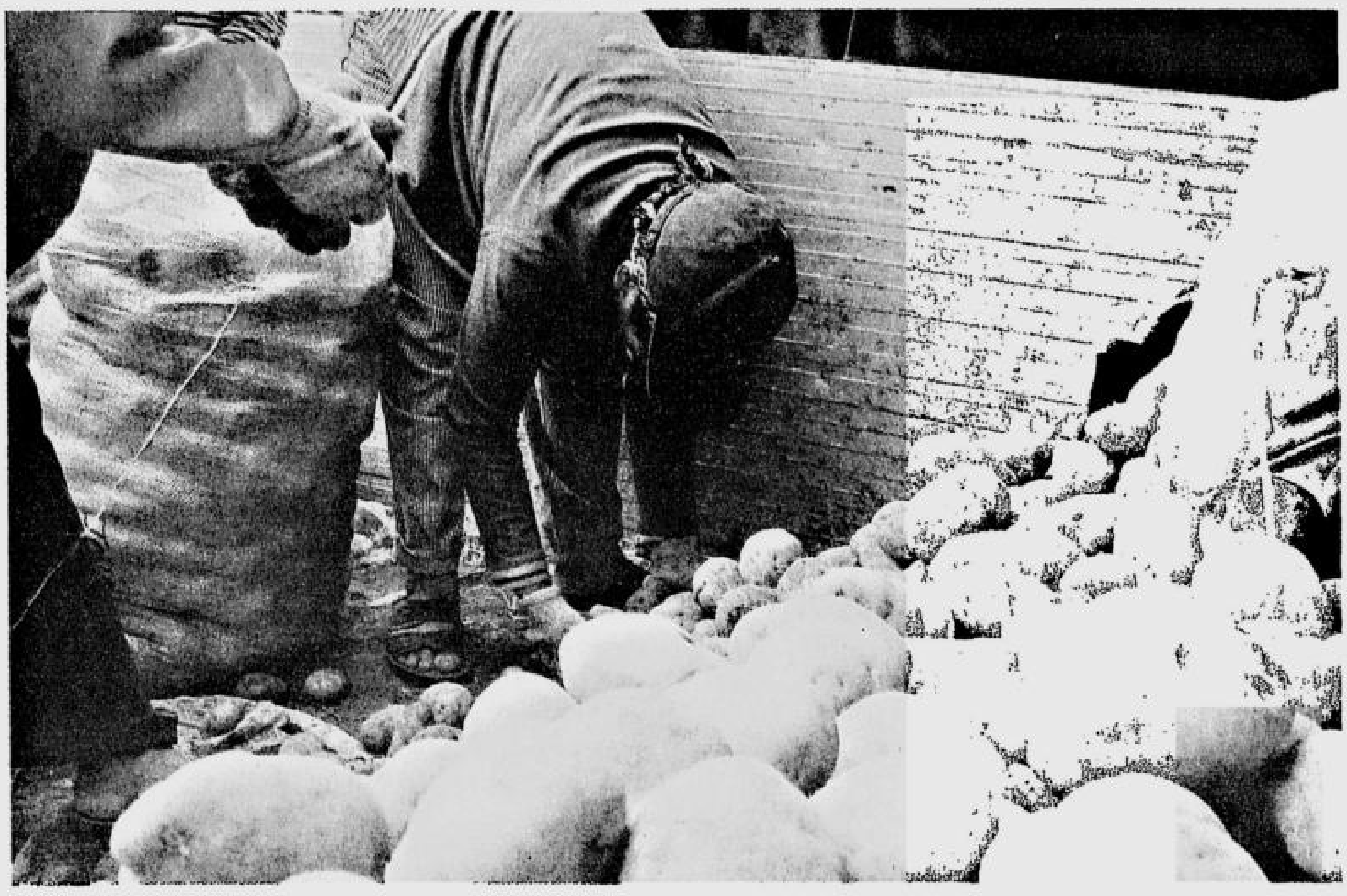
Galicia is in the police's watch list after he was linked to the abduction and subsequent murder of Pantay Matanda barangay captain Greg Lantin almost two years ago, Saligao said.

He, however, refused to confirm if the suspect was indeed the triggerman of Rosales as they have yet to present Saligao to their main witness. Saligao said NAKTF was the lead agency in the police operation against Galicia.

"Galicia is in the custody of NAKTF since he was arrested. We haven't presented him to our witness. He was apprehended not only because of the killing of Judge Rosales but because of a string of criminal cases against him," he said.

Saligao said despite Galicia's arrest, they were still pursuing their investigation of the ambush of Rosales and would not declare the case closed.

A source said Galicia is also behind the ambush-slaying of his uncle Armando Lucido, a businessman and suspected *jueteng* operator in Batangas, also in Tanauan City a month ago. *Villamor Visaya Jr. and Joya Santos-Doctor, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



TRADING POST

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Lack of storage facilities makes farmers' lives more difficult in La Trinidad, Benguet. This farmer is forced to pack his potato harvest manually and quickly for lack of storage.

Sulu political leaders start bid to end feuds

DAVAO CITY—Political leaders of Sulu have started talking about how to end all types of bloody feuds in the province saying peace would eventually make their place attractive to investors.

"From Armalite to the wheelbarrows," Gov. Benjamin Loong said.

Loong and other Sulu political leaders are in town during the past two days, attending the workshop "Bridging the Sulu Divide," which seeks to address the development gap of Sulu.

During the workshop, some town mayors from Sulu said they wanted to encourage eco-tourism by developing the province's over a hundred islands and islets, similar to those found in Sipadan Island in Malaysia.

But they immediately agreed that the stigma of the past years' kidnappings and violence still lingers and local officials said among the first things they have to change is that ugly image.

Asian Institute of Management (AIM) Professor Ernesto Garilao said the prolonged conflict on the island has taken its toll on the quality of life of people in Sulu.

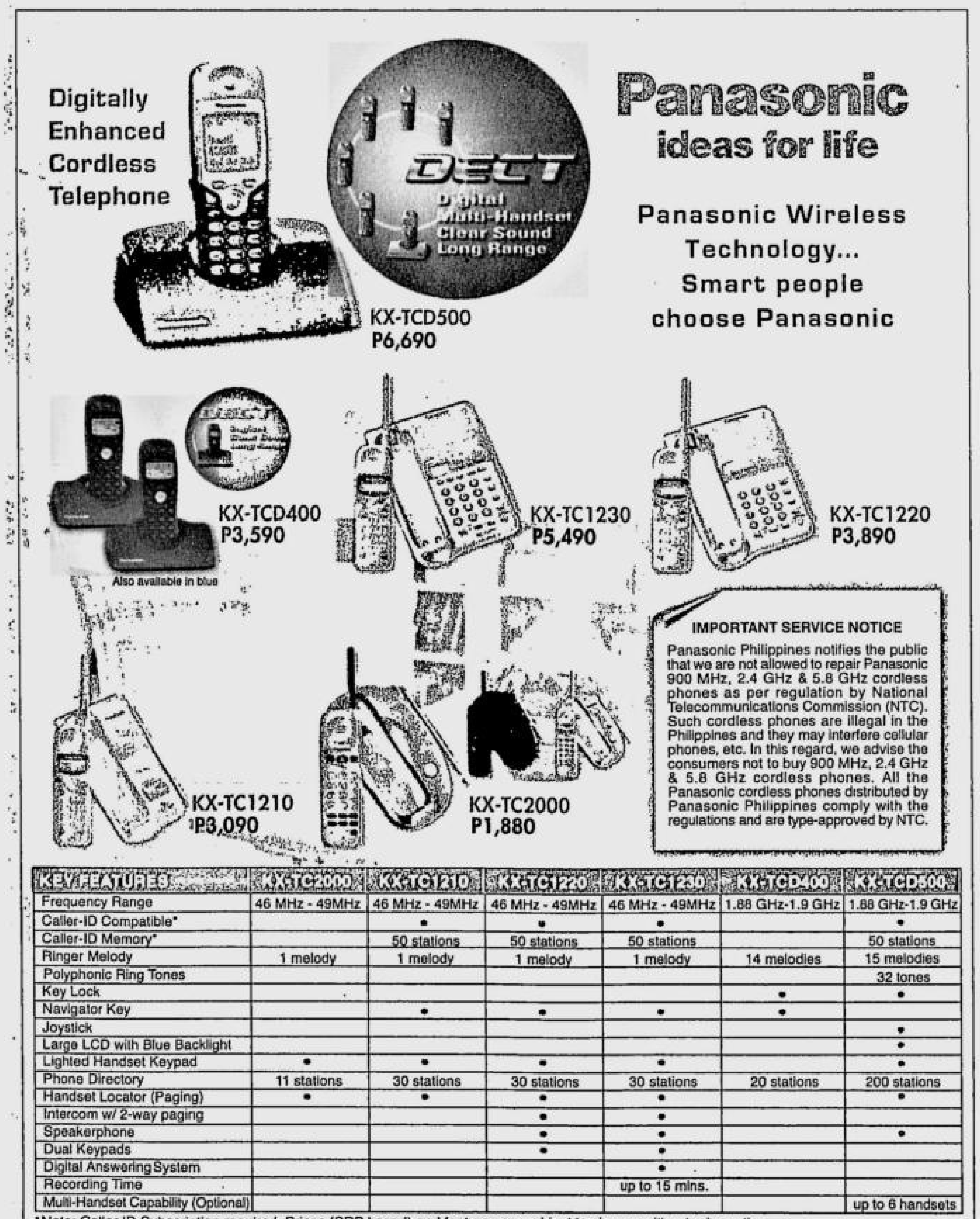
People there die faster, says Garilao quoting an AIM study.

"They only live up to an average of 52 years, 17 years shorter than those living in other parts of the country," he said.

Garilao, who used to teach at the Notre Dame of Jolo, said the "high trauma and poverty caused by war rob people off 17 years of their life in Sulu."

Garilao also said quality of life in Sulu is the country's lowest, poverty is at its highest. The situation has been so bad that the province has stopped being compared with other countries in Asia, he said.

"If we can lump Tawi-Tawi, Basilan and Sulu together, and get their human development index, we could no longer compare them with other countries in Asia because they've already sunk as low as the poorest countries of Africa," said Garilao. *Germelina Lacorte, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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787 dengue cases in Calabarzon

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—The Calabarzon region is now swarming with dengue victims, with 787 persons monitored by the Southern Tagalog Regional Health Office (RHO).

Three of them have died, according to the RHO on Monday.

Dr. Lorenzo Sarmiento, RHO in charge of Dengue Control and Monitoring told the INQUIRER that there are 361 victims of dengue hemorrhagic fever and 426 victims of dengue fever in Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Quezon and Rizal. The three fatalities came from Laguna, Quezon and Rizal.

Dengue hemorrhagic fever are cases where the victims experience bleeding, the Health Department said.

The highest cases of dengue are in Rizal province with 368 victims. Laguna came second with 159 victims. The lowest number came from Cavite with 54 victims.

Sarmiento said this year's dengue cases have declined compared to last year's total number of victims which was 25 percent higher.

Sarmiento reminded all families, households and individuals to take preventive measures to avoid contracting the dengue malady. *Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Int'l journalists' group slams proposal to arm media men

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has written to President Macapagal-Arroyo expressing its opposition to the proposal of the Philippine National Police to allow journalists to carry firearms in response to the spate of killings of reporters.

The group, which claims to have 500,000 members worldwide, also called on the President to establish an independent commission to investigate why the killings of around 55 journalists remain unsolved.

In an e-mailed letter, IFJ president Christopher Warren said the PNP's proposal to allow journalists to carry firearms is "completely the wrong approach. More guns are simply not the answer to the crisis facing journalists in the Philippines."

"Journalists are independent observers and should not be encouraged to be active combatants in the increasingly dangerous domestic environment in the Philippines," said Warren.

More violence

Police officials, including PNP chief Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, earlier broached the idea of arming the journalists after two broadcasters, Roger Mariano and Arnel Manalo, were shot dead last week.

Another reporter, Jonathan Abayon of RGMA Superadyo in General Santos City, died on Monday, a day after he was shot allegedly by William Bael, a civilian bodyguard of boxing champion Manny Pacquiao. It was not clear, however, if the attack was related to Abayon's work.

Warren said the PNP's moves were "counter-productive and encourage those with gripes against journalists to resort to violence."

"While we appreciate your efforts and offer cautious support for the spirit behind the moves to stop the killing spree against journalists in the Philippines, it is vital to recognize that the 'more guns' strategy promotes more violence and an increased state of lawlessness," Warren said in his letter to Ms Arroyo dated Aug. 9.

Warren pointed out that the police's responsibilities are to enforce the law and protect the people.

Press organizations in the country have also raised opposition to the proposal.

Knee jerk reaction

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) said the "lame, knee-jerk response is a virtual admission by law-enforcement authorities of how inutile they are against those that seek to silence the press in this country."

The NUJP said the move "assigns blame to journalists: Because we're not armed, we're vulnerable—this is what the PNP seems to be saying."

Lawyer Eduardo Jalbuna, president of the Iloilo Press Club Inc., said arming journalists will not stop the killings. "What is necessary is basic police work—apprehend the killers and prosecute them."

Iloilo City councilor Ely Estante, a former broadcaster, will file a resolution today during the regular session of the city council condemning the killings.

College student loses job for joining rally

KABACAN, North Cotabato—A college student here lost his job and a P1,000 monthly allowance as a working student because he participated in a demonstration inside the University of Southern Mindanao (USM) campus here against the presence of American servicemen.

By losing the monthly allowance, the student might as well stop going to school.

Nispi Landayan, 23, said his attention was called by a security officer of USM, a premier state university in Central Mindanao, two days after he went with some student protesters who demonstrated in front of the campus hostel where the American soldiers were staying.

The security officer, he said, told him that he has just lost his job because he participated in the protest action.

"I explained to him that I did not join the demonstration to create conflict or anything but because I believe I have a responsibility as a student of the university. I was just concerned," Landayan said.

"No matter how I explained my side to them, they didn't listen to me," he added.

Landayan is a fourth year student of the university taking up Bachelor of Science in Islamic Studies. His task as a working student was to post as student guard at the Institute of Middle East and Asian Studies (Imeas) and enjoys a monthly allowance of P1,000.

Landayan started working as student guard for the Imeas, which is also a Muslim mosque, when he was still a sophomore.

Although a grant-in-aid scholar, a scholarship given to members of the Bangsamoro and the indigenous peoples, Landayan relied so much on the meager allowance for sustenance.

"The money helped me in my studies although I do not pay for my tuition. Where will I look for money to buy food now?" Landayan said.

Landayan is the youngest among three siblings. He said his family is counting so much on him because he is the only one of the three who has ever gone to school.

This incident floated the name of Insp. Abelio Jungaya, the municipal police commander, who allegedly ordered the termination of Landayan.

"I was told that he ordered it. This is something that I can't really accept because it didn't go through any process," Landayan said.

But Jungaya denied he was behind Landayan's termination.

"That's no longer part of my responsibility or power as chief of police. I don't even know him. If he was terminated I have nothing to do with that. That's an internal problem of the USM," Jungaya said. *Jeffrey Tupas and Germelina Lacorte, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

A RALLY against US-led military exercises like this one in Davao City could be risky to one's job, a student in North Cotabato learned.

723,700 ha of public land lying idle, says real estate expert

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—At least 19,198 parcels of public lands turned over by the Presidential Management Staff to the Public Estates Authority during the Estrada administration have remained idle. These are found in various parts of the country and total 723,700 hectares.

"No action is known to have taken place to put these assets into productive use," said Nestor Mangio, president of the National Real Estate Association, in a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Mangio, an architect and also the president and chief executive officer of the Central Country Estate Inc., urged the President to "optimize the utilization" of idle public lands and real estate assets of government agencies.

"For instance, some public schools occupy land that may have already outlived their original intended use, and are now ready for redevelopment into high-value best use, in partnership with the private sector," he said.

According to Mangio, these properties can be "redeveloped to ensure that new educational buildings and facilities are made as integral parts of the development plans."

In the letter, Mangio, one of the three Asians enrolled in the Harvard University's advanced management and development program in real estate, proposed other actions in support of the Ms Arroyo's 10-point national agenda.

These are:

* Generate hundreds of millions of pesos in government revenues from the sale of air and underground rights over public properties and/or establishments.

* Encourage local governments to enter into joint ventures with private entities involving the development of idle land assets to raise funds for basic public services and social development projects such as workforce housing, parks, health care facilities, educational facilities and other related "public real estate investments."

* Empower the proposed Department of Housing and Urban Development (Mangio proposed this to be named as the Department of Housing and Real Estate) to pursue public land development, not only in urban areas, but also in suburbs and provinces, to decongest Metro Manila and city centers.

* Sustain initiatives to link the country's many islands and regions with a modern and suitable transportation system, to facilitate the movement of people as well as goods and services. This in effect will create live/work places in these growth centers.

* Banks and financial institutions should be supportive of real estate development to encourage more development. A study of the United States Real Estate Investment Trust (Reit), and how it can be applied in the Philippine setting, is being studied. Tapping these public funds will help boost the real estate industry.

ROUNDUP

Inmate found dead

ROXAS CITY—An inmate at the police station in Panay town, Capiz was found dead last Aug. 7, hanging from a nylon rope tied around his neck inside the toilet of his detention cell. SPO1 Nonong Berdugo said investigation showed that Ronilo Bandoquillo, 23, committed suicide. But Army Sgt. Benito Bandoquillo said there was foul play in his brother's death and asked that Ronilo's body be autopsied. Benito said that last June 9, he received a letter from Ronilo, asking that he be transferred to another detention cell because he heard some policemen talking about killing him. But Benito ignored the letter because he was confident that his brother was safe inside the police station. Ronilo was detained after he was accused of killing a co-employee last April following a misunderstanding.

Felipe Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau

14 held for drugs

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—Police arrested in separate operations at least 14 suspects who were allegedly in possession of sachets with shabu and drug paraphernalia. A report by Laguna police director Senior Supt. Edwin Corvera to the Philippine National Police Regional Office showed that local police arrested four suspects in Sta. Rosa City, four in Biñan, one in Victoria, four in Barangay Pansol, Calamba City, and one in Calauan. Corvera said the local police offices had already prepared charges for filing in proper courts.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Oratorical tilt on 29th yr

THE MARIANO B. Carbonell Oratorical Contest, which is now on its 29th year, will be held on Friday, Aug. 13 at the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University in Bacnotan, La Union, according to a news release. Conceived in 1976 by the children of Mariano B. Carbonell, one of the first Philippine government scholars to the United States, the contest aims to perpetuate the quest for knowledge of Bacnotan and San Fernando City students through oration and debate. Carbonell studied at Dekalb University in Illinois. Upon his return to the Philippines, he taught in San Fernando, La Union. Later he worked for the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association in Manila and was instrumental in sending many Ilocanos to work in Hawaii. He died on July 22, 1975. Aside from the oratorical contest, the Carbonell family also sponsors 10 scholarships at the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University.

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Majority blinks, will take 'crumbs'

From page A1

political differences and get down to work, as they scrambled for solutions to recent squabbles.

The majority bloc may let go of some "powerful" committees to appease opposition senators who have complained of the "crumbs" thrown their way.

"I guess it will have to be the majority," Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan told the INQUIRER when asked who could provide a breakthrough in the impasse over the allocation of committee chairmanships.

Leftovers

Pangilinan has set a meeting today with Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. to "thresh out the issues." Basically, he meant objections to the eight "leftover committees" being offered to the minority.

Other words the smarting senators used to describe the eight committees included "minor," "hodgepodge" and "garbage."

"We're looking for a win-win solution if there is one," said Pangilinan.

But he wouldn't pinpoint which committees the majority were likely to give up. He said his colleagues had "not spoken yet."

No takers

The ruling party has appropriated for itself the chairmanships of 28 of the 36 standing committees, triggering a heated debate on the floor on Monday.

Senators Rodolfo Biazon and Alfredo Lim figured in an altercation over the latter's use of the word "*swapang*" (greedy) to describe what he considered "unequal" distribution.

Biazon and Lim nearly came to blows, but they later shook hands at the Senate lounge. Biazon, a member of the majority, said he would give up his slots in the housing and defense committees if asked to do so.

"We are not begging—not at all—or demanding specific committees," Pimentel clarified in a separate interview. Neither were they questioning the majority's prerogative to assign chairmanships, he said. "What we want is equal allocation. Based on the political configuration in the chamber, that would be 60-40."

He said there were "no takers" for the eight committees being offered to his bloc.

But even as he confirmed the meeting with Pangilinan today, Pimentel said he had not been informed of a possible reallocation. Just the same, he seemed pleased with the prospect, saying it would work "toward galvanizing support for various remedial legislation that the country needs to set aright what is wrong with this country."

Besides Pimentel and Lim, opposition big shots Edgardo Angara, Juan Ponce Enrile and Panfilo Lacson also stood up on Monday to denounce what they believed was a move to further drive a wedge between the two blocs.

Try basketball

But yesterday, Lacson had a clear-cut suggestion. The matter might be resolved, he said, if the chamber applied the drafting rules employed by the National Basketball Association of the United States.

He explained to reporters: The 13 majority senators (excluding Senate President Franklin Drilon) get first crack at the 36 committees, after which they give the 23 committees for the nine minority senators to choose from. Then the remaining 14 committees go back to the majority for final disposition.

"We accept the fact that we're from the minority," Lacson said—meaning, if his proposal is rejected, it will be "just fine." In which case, he urged Drilon to resolve the problem immediately.

Ticking bomb

"We're sitting on a ticking bomb," Angara warned. "We should look at the overall picture and see how we can share the work and responsibility in this chamber."

He pointed out that the eight committees allotted for the minority were either "ad hocs, adjuncts of other bigger committees, or hodgepodge."

Which was sad, he pointed out, because the majority needed all the help it could get.

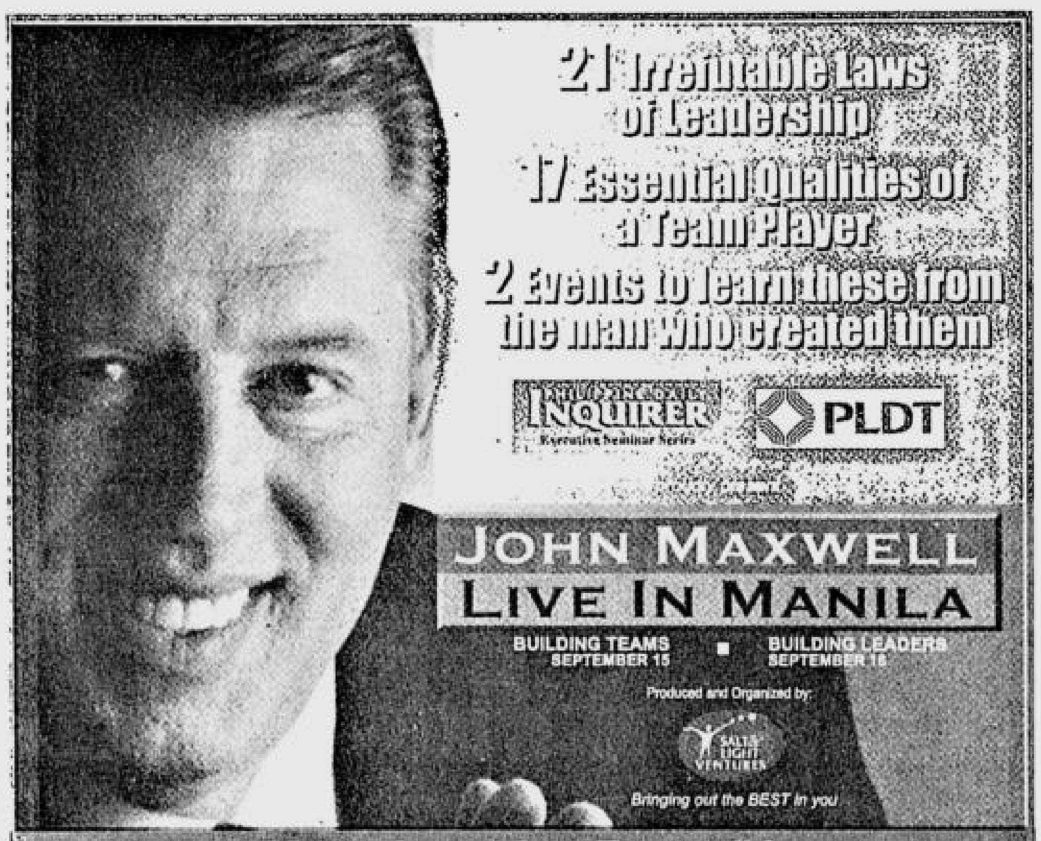
Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said her colleagues in the majority should probably consider giving key committees to opposition senators with exemplary qualifications.

Enrile's credentials

For instance, she said, Enrile, who has a law degree from Harvard, would be wasted ("*sayang*") in a small committee.

It was Enrile who earlier delivered a privilege speech chastising the majority bloc for giving the minority "garbage" committees.

The opposition would "dance according to the tune [that the majority wants] to play," he said. "Whether [you] want cooperation or adversarial proceedings in the Senate, it's up to you. To the victors belong the spoils... but reason and wisdom dictate that we should be fair with one another."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Helen Mogan, La Union

US tag of CPP as terror . . .

From page A1

This warning was aired yesterday by NDF negotiator Luis Jalandoni, who said the renewed order against the CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army, showed that the measures undertaken in the two joint statements issued by the negotiating panels on Feb. 14 and April 3 had not been achieved.

"This repeated act of blatant violation of the national sovereignty of the Filipino people infringes on our jurisdiction and is an intervention into the competence of the [Philippine government] and the NDF in judging Philippine events," Jalandoni told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

"We condemn this, and it will be a priority in the peace talks," he added.

The US classification of the CPP-NPA as a foreign terrorist organization was issued exactly two years ago. Under US law, such a designation must be renewed every two years, or it will cease to be effective.

Provisions

The order makes it illegal for people in the United States or subject to US jurisdiction to provide material support to the CPP-NPA, and requires US financial institutions to block its assets.

It also provides a basis for the United States to deny visas to representatives and members of the group.

The US state department announced in Washington that the decision to renew the order was made by Secretary of State Colin Powell following a review of records and in consultation with the attorney general and the secretary of the treasury.

But deputy spokesperson Adam Ereli said the move "does not preclude the possibility of an eventual peaceful settlement" between the Philippine government and the CPP-NPA, which has waged a 35-year insurgency in the countryside.

Very serious problems

The fourth round of peace talks between the Philippine government and the Netherlands-based NDF is scheduled to start on Aug. 23 in Oslo, Norway. But the NDF is pressing the government to hold the talks in Beijing.

Speaking over ABS-CBN, chief government negotiator Silvestre Bello said his counterparts in the NDF panel had informally voiced "serious concerns" over the terror designation by Washington, which "may cause some very serious problems to the pursuit" of a negotiated settlement to the insurgency.

But he reminded them that they had signed an agreement to pursue the talks "without any preconditions."

"They cannot use this issue (the renewed order) to maybe suspend or maybe even call for a suspension of the talks. That would be a violation of our agreed framework for the talks," he said.

But Jalandoni said the NDF would have to discuss the effect of the renewed listing and "watch for the response" of the Philippine government to it.

"It all depends on how the [government] will be bound to this [listing]," he said, adding:

"We consider this an urgent action. The NDF has been demanding repeatedly that we be taken out of the [terrorist] list, and we have made clear our stand on this."

Jalandoni said the new order was also "a gross violation" of the joint Hague agreement of Sept. 1, 1992, which serves as the guiding principle of the peace negotiations.

"Therefore, the [government] has to answer for this. It shows they agreed to the listing, which we consider baseless and malicious," he said.

No sufficient progress

But even the European Union sees no reason to drop the CPP-NPA from its own list of foreign terrorist organizations, according to Ambassador Johannes "Jan" de Kok, head of the European Commission delegation to Manila.

De Kok said the EU member-states, and the European Union itself, had yet to see "sufficient progress" in the peace talks.

"And it calls for both parties, the Philippine government and the NDF, to improve on the status of the peace negotiations," he told reporters in an ambush interview at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

De Kok said that unless the NPA rebels stopped the "hostilities on the ground" and took serious steps to forge a peace agreement with the government, the EU's "terror tag" would stay.

"As soon as they cease their terrorist activities, [the chances of] the terror tag being removed will be greater," he said.

De Kok pointed out that in contrast, the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front had forged a ceasefire agreement with the government.

"When you look at the hostilities taking place in Mindanao ... [you will see] there's a very significant difference now, compared to 12 months ago, in terms of the observance of a ceasefire and, therefore, economic development and the people getting on with their lives," he said.

"And I hope something similar can be made in the areas where there are NPA activities. Irrespective of the ideology, in the end, we will have to come to a compromise," he added.

No. 1 terrorist

In a statement released in Lucena City, CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said the renewed order was "an outright intervention in the internal affairs of the Philippines" and a desperate attempt to draw attention away from the US government's own actions as "the world's No. 1 terrorist."

"We will not take this matter sitting down," he said, and condemned the Philippine government for "seeking and accepting such high-handed intervention by the US government."

But Rosal demanded: "Who is the real terrorist?"

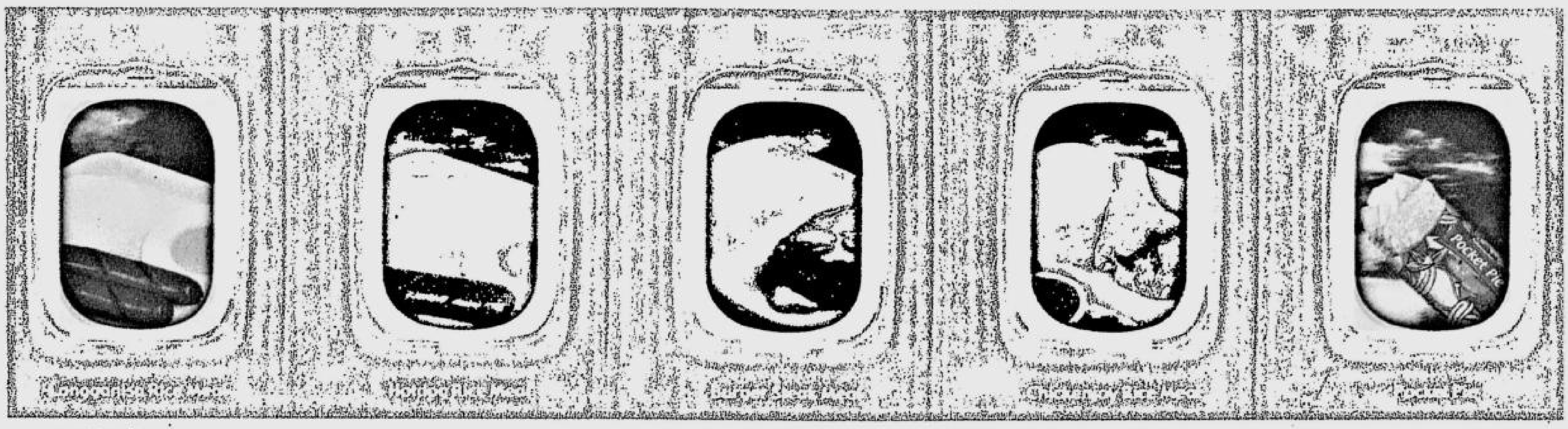
"After unleashing so much terror in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, US imperialism, the No. 1 global terrorist, has no moral right and legitimacy to condemn Filipino revolutionaries as terrorists. In the first place, it has no real basis to do so," he said.

Reflection of public sentiment

In his own statement, Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said the new listing reflected the public sentiment on the insurgents.

"[It] not only reflects an insight of a foreign nation on the local communists but [also echoes] the Filipino nation's sentiments and opinion on the CPP-NPA and their front organizations, [whether] operating legally, semi-legally and illegally," he said.

Lucero also claimed that the CPP-NPA had performed acts of terrorism, allegedly including the burning of commercial buses and the destruction of cell sites, supposedly due to the refusal of their owners to give in to the insurgents' extortion demands. ***With reports from TJ Burgonio in Manila; Delfin T. Mallari Jr. PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; AFP***



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(In exact order)

Marcelo plea: Not guilty

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IN A BRIEF appearance in a Manila court yesterday, one of the accused in the rape-slay of bank teller Candice Castro held on to his claim that he was not guilty of the grisly crimes.

Philippe Marcelo was arraigned yesterday morning in the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 53, the first in the court's schedule for the day.

Marcelo, who had told police that he did not hurt Castro and merely helped the other suspect, Bebs Reyes, gain entry into the victim's condominium, entered a 'not guilty' plea. From a distance stood Castro's parents, Rogelio and Grace.

The 21-year-old suspect was escorted back to the Manila City Jail by two armed guards right after.

The court scheduled the pretrial on Aug. 27, when both the defense and the prosecution are expected to tell the court what documents they would present, and witnesses they would bring during the trial.

Marcelo's lawyer, Augusto-Jimenez, said that on Aug. 19, his client was also scheduled to file his reply to charges of perjury, false testimony and libel filed earlier by Reyes.

Authorities are still searching for Reyes after an arrest warrant was issued against him on July 27, a day after he was indicted for killing Castro.

On May 12, Castro was found naked and stabbed to death inside her condominium at the 11th floor of the Vellagio Tower on Leon Guinto Street, Malate, Manila.

Marcelo lived on the 6th floor, while Reyes allegedly stayed on the same floor as Castro.

The court had also issued a hold departure order against Reyes, son of a Bureau of Immigration investigation officer, to prevent him from leaving the country.

Reyes' lawyer, Rico Bolongaita, who is bent on appealing Reyes' indictment before the justice department, said that his client is still in the country, but added that he did not know exactly where he was.

For as long as Reyes is at large, court proceedings against him cannot proceed.

Routine check leads to 2-hour gun battle; 3 killed

By Leila B. Salaverria

IT WAS a routine police operation gone awry. In the end, three people were dead and three others were wounded.

On Monday night, the Western Police District Station 11 in Binondo, Manila, received a call about three armed men seen along T. Alonzo Street.

At 7:45 p.m. policemen who went to check the report saw three men later identified as Dennis Cañeso, 32; Ariel Estrelles, 35; and Ronald Pardillo, 19, along Alonzo Street.

The three were all from Paradise Street, Letre, Malabon.

According to investigator Athos de Quiros, the lawmen were approaching to confront the men when two of the men drew handguns and opened fire. SPO1 Robert Zapata was hit in the left thigh.

Policemen retaliated, hitting Cañeso in the left shoulder. He later died at the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center.

Pardillo and Estrelles fled and started a two-hour running gun battle that ended at the Santrans Bus Terminal along Doroteo Jose.

During the chase, police caught up with Pardillo, who readily surrendered.

But Estrelles ran on, passing through Kusang Loob Street toward Doroteo Jose and firing sporadic shots at pursuing lawmen.

Members of the the WPD Special Weapons and Tactics team and the Sta. Cruz station then joined the chase.

A bystander, Roselio Lacaste, 30, was killed in the crossfire. He died from four gunshot wounds.

At the Santrans bus depot, Estrelles shot it out with lawmen who started to encircle him.

In the exchange of gunfire, PO3 Raul Baldomar and bystander Thelma de Vera, a beautician and wife of a bus driver, were wounded.

Baldomar was shot in the leg, while De Vera was hit in the right arm and left leg.

After a standoff, policemen found Estrelles under a bus and opened fire. The suspect was hit in the left jaw and on his right arm. He died on the spot.

De Quiros said Estrelles was still clutching a .45-caliber pistol in his right hand when he died.

Police said the three men were suspected robbers waiting for a victim.

However, Pardillo claimed that they were out to exact revenge on a man who allegedly killed his grandfather.

In all, the police seized a .38-caliber revolver and two .45 caliber pistols from the suspects.

The two wounded SWAT members, who were treated at the Chinese General Hospital, would be recommended for promotion by the WPD, said spokesperson Chief Insp. Gerry Agunod.

The were awarded medals yesterday for being wounded in the line of duty.

2 inmates die in Cainta prison

GETTING CREATIVE
A couple walks past a giant poster of a cosmetic product in Makati City. Businesses have resorted to creative advertising to cope with rising costs due to the hike in fuel prices. REUTERS

By Luige del Puerto

IF IT was meant as punishment, it was more than enough to atone for their misdeeds.

Two inmates at the Cainta Municipal Jail died early this week, and jail authorities are at loss to explain the disease that killed them.

Juan Rafael was only 21 when he died Sunday. He was facing charges of theft, a bailable offense.

Ronald Salado, 27, accused of using prohibited drugs, died the following day.

At least eight inmates are showing symptoms of the illness that killed Salado and Rafael, according to jail warden Sr. Insp. Randal Latoza.

The jail warden could not sufficiently explain the illness. "Their legs would bloat, like there was water inside. Later, they would have difficulty breathing. I'm a bit worried because two have already died," he told the INQUIRER.

Latoza said the eight inmates are being carefully monitored and just had a checkup on Monday.

If their condition worsens, they would immediately be brought to the hospital, he added.

"We really have a big problem," he said. "We want to isolate them, so the other inmates are not at risk. But the question is, where will we transfer them?"

The town jail, which was built to accommodate only 70 to 100 inmates, now houses around 240 men, women and children.

It has no cells for minors.

The jail has a tiny space for mentally unstable inmates. But Latoza said he could not move the inmates occupying it now to accommodate the eight ailing prisoners.

Latoza said he had learned that around six other detainees had died this year in the crowded jail.

"One prisoner had tuberculosis, and then progressively got worse," Latoza said. " The other inmates, I was told, showed the same symptoms of the disease that claimed the lives of the two who died this week."

The problem could probably be traced to the inmates' diet. "A doctor said their diet lacked protein and calcium," Latoza said.

Jail administrators are still waiting for the results of several medical tests conducted on the sick prisoners.

A group of Polytechnic University of the Philippines students who visited the jail recently had been asked by Latoza to help prepare a menu rich in protein, but not one that would strain their limited budget.

"Maybe they could have bits of chicken and beans," the warden suggested.

Mayor Mon Ilagan said he was aware of the congestion problem, and is now working out a plan to help the inmates.

"I know the jail is congested. I have visited it. There is a proposal to expand the facility, but the problem right now is where to get the money. I'm still working on our budget," he said.

Ilagan had been eyeing a garage abandoned in 1998 by the town's Bureau of Fire Protection office. Built next to the town jail, it could be converted into another cell, enough to house around 50 persons.

Ilagan said he might ask provincial jail authorities to accommodate some of the inmates.

Mother decries police watch on son

By Tina G. Santos

"MY SON is innocent and he does not deserve to be treated like a criminal."

Thus said Marlene Aguilar of her son, Jason Ivler, 23, who was behind the wheel of a Toyota Prado that police said crashed into the Isuzu Trooper driven by Undersecretary Nestor Ponce Jr. early Sunday morning in Pasig City.

Ponce, Presidential Assistant for Resettlement, died in the accident. His wife, Evangeline, who was beside him in the car, is being treated for injuries.

A nephew of popular singer Freddie Aguilar, Jason remains under observation at the Asian Hospital in Alabang.

Aguilar told reporters yesterday that the police had posted a 24-hour watch on her son, a University of Hawaii student on vacation in the country.

"No charges had been filed against my son. We were not given any reason for the police presence. We want to know why he is being treated like a criminal," she said.

Aguilar added that they were forced to hire the services of the Asian Development Bank Security "to ensure that nobody would touch Jason."

Jason had been placed on the hold departure order list at all airports in the country, she was told.

"They're making a big thing out of the issue because Mr. Ponce was a government official, implying that my son would run away from responsibility," she said.

Initial investigation showed that Ponce was driving toward Makati City when Ivler's vehicle, which was on the opposite lane, crossed the center island and hit the left portion of the victim's Trooper.

But Aguilar claimed that comments from Metro Manila Development Authority officials at the scene of the accident, and a radio interview allegedly given by Mrs. Ponce, said otherwise, suggesting that Ponce's car could have been hit by another vehicle.

She also wished that Mrs. Ponce "may learn to live in pain better."

"I know the pain of losing the person you love, and no words are enough to ease the agony and suffering you (Mrs. Ponce) and your family are now going through," Aguilar said.

METROBRIEFS

Summarily executed in QC

FOUR men, believed to be victims of summary execution, were found early yesterday morning in Quezon City. All the victims had slit throats and stab wounds in the chests. They were discovered at about 1 a.m. on Sauyo Road, Novaliches, by a tricycle driver. The victims' hands were tied and their mouths covered with masking tape. Authorities said a vigilante group could be behind the killings. The victims were described as medium built, between 30 to 40 years old and had fair complexion. The discovery of the bodies brought to 42 the number of suspected "salvage" victims in the city since last year. *Tina G. Santos*

Lacson case vs Tulfo junked

THE QUEZON City Prosecutor's Office has dismissed the libel suit filed by Sen. Panfilo Lacson against Ramon Tulfo and officials of RPN 9. Assistant City Prosecutor Raniel Cruz said there was no malice in the showing of an episode of "Isumbong Mo Kay Tulfo" that purportedly tried to destroy the reputation of the senator. *Tina G. Santos*

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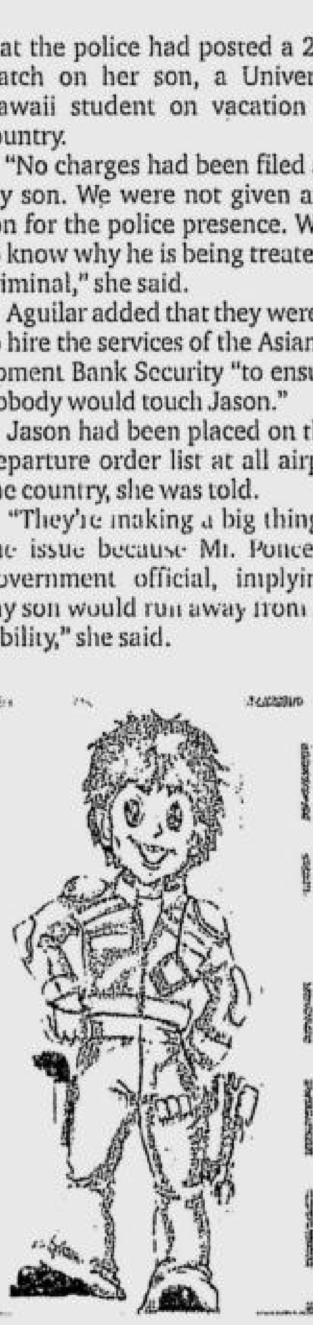

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Check the terminals for loose connection and accumulated dirt. Check water and voltage level of the battery as well.
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and the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Four cities unite to tax MRT

By Tina G. Santos

FOUR local government units playing host to the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) have "joined forces" to compel the firm to settle its more than P4 billion in tax obligations.

The city treasurers and assessors of the cities of Quezon, Makati, Mandaluyong and Pasay met yesterday to form a synchronized movement to collect the real property taxes which the MRT operators owed them since 2000.

They claimed that the MRT's balance liability was reducing the collection efficiency of their respective governments.

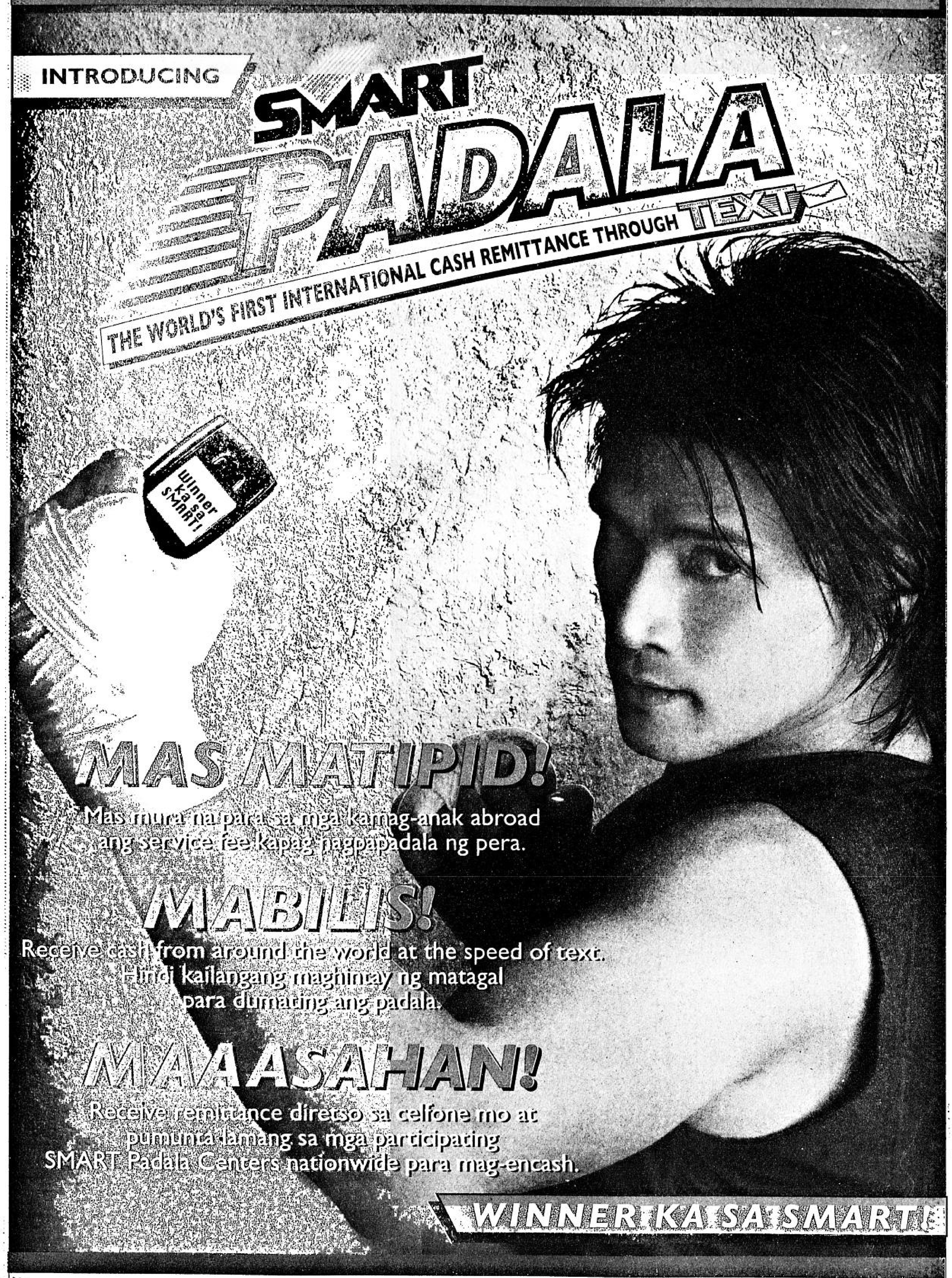
MRT reportedly owes Pasay P287,004.89; Makati, P1, 019,568,313.60; Mandaluyong, P1,044,940,335.96; and Quezon City, P2,015,158,700.09.

The city officials said they were forced to organize after the MRT, through its lead agency the Department of Transportation and Communications, reportedly withdrew its commitment to pay taxes.

Quezon City treasurer Victor Endriga said then Finance Secretary Isidro Camacho and Director Benjamin Geronimo and Paul Daza, representative of MRT, admitted during a previous meeting that the MRT had to defer payments due to lack of funds and asked "for time to have the tax obligations included in the next budget."

Endriga pointed out that a Supreme Court decision had ruled that another light rail line, the LRT, was taxable.

ISA PANG BREAKTHROUGH MULA SA LEADER IN WIRELESS, LEADER IN INNOVATION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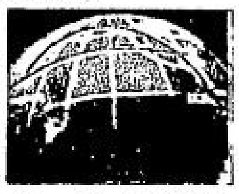

❷ Ipapadala ng SMART Padala Remittance Partner abroad ang pera diretso sa celfone mo.

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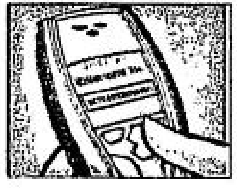

❹ I-activate ang SMART Money Account Number sa celfone mo.

❺ Pumunta sa alinmang participating SMART Padala Center sa Pilipinas.

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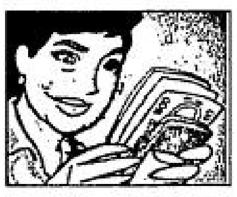
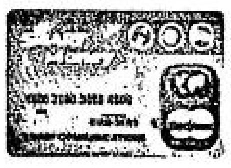
❻ Ilipat ang cash na natanggap sa celfone mo sa SMART Money Account ng SMART Padala Center.*



❼ Kunin ang cash.**



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BASKETBALL: USAB World Tour; 7 p.m.; IBC 13—The US Men's Basketball Team continue its warm-up for Athens.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

NBA Greatest Games—Knicks vs Bulls, Game 3, 1994 Eastern Semifinals; 8 a.m. (r-5 p.m.); Solar Sports—New York and Chicago tangle in this memorable encounter.

Sir Charles; 10 a.m. (r-7 p.m.); Solar Sports—Learn more about the colorful career of Charles Barkley.

NBA Greatest Games—Lakers vs Spurs, Game 6, 1983 Western Finals; 11 a.m.; Solar Sports—Relive this classic duel between LA and San Antonio.

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2 DAYS TO ATHENS

Tightest security ever for Games

ATHENS—Greece and the International Olympic Committee said on Monday they were confident everything had been done to ensure the Athens Games are safe from a terrorist attack.

As preparations quickened for Friday's opening ceremony, six more athletes were thrust into the spotlight over drugs but IOC president Jacques Rogge hailed it as a mark of success that the battle against cheats was being won.

Rogge and Greek Premier Costas Karamanlis delivered upbeat messages as last-minute magic from Athens helped sweep aside gloomy visions of wet concrete and unsold tickets and primed the ancient city to welcome the Olympics home.

"Security has been, and remains, the number one priority at the Games. The IOC has full confidence in the Greek government," Rogge said.

"These efforts are justified, as, going beyond the Games, what is at stake is protecting society, democracy, civilization and freedom," he said in an apparent reference to the threat of attack by al Qaeda and other militant groups.

ATHENS 2004

"We have taken all measures with the cooperation of friendly and allied countries. We have done what is humanely possible so that all athletes and visitors feel safe," Karamanlis said. "Greece is ready for successful Games under conditions of maximum security."

A late spurt of all-out construction efforts had banished fears of half-finished arenas, said Games organizers, and a surge of ticket sales overturned predictions that the locals would quit town from Aug. 13 to 29 to avoid the "chaos."

Organizers aim to sell 3.4 million tickets by Friday and see demand accelerating toward an ultimate goal of 5.2 million.

The war on drugs put the focus on an American sprinter, two Greek baseball players, a Swiss cyclist, an Irish athlete and a Spanish canoeist.

Bernard Williams, a gold medal winner in the US 4x100 relay team at the Sydney Olympics in 2000, tested positive for a banned substance at a meeting in Seville in June, said the US Anti-Doping Agency. Williams remained eligible to compete in Athens, the agency said.

Irish 10,000 meters runner Cathal Lombard acknowledged a test had found banned erythropoietin, known as EPO, in his system.

Swiss cyclist Oscar Camenzind was also named and shamed after testing positive for the same substance, which enhances endurance.

The list of offenders grew with Spanish canoeist Jovino Gonzalez also testing positive for EPO.

The risk of a terrorist threat at the first Summer Olympics since the 2001 attacks on the United States has added at least $1.5 billion to the costs of the Games.

But while the biggest security operation in peacetime Europe is being mounted, the mood so far is serene. Said Dutch swimmer Annabel Koster: "There's no sense in being worried about it all the time."

Reuters

First Olympic gold now worth ₱8M

THE PAYCHECK continues to fatten for whoever becomes the country's first Olympic gold medal winner.

The latest bounty: P8 million.

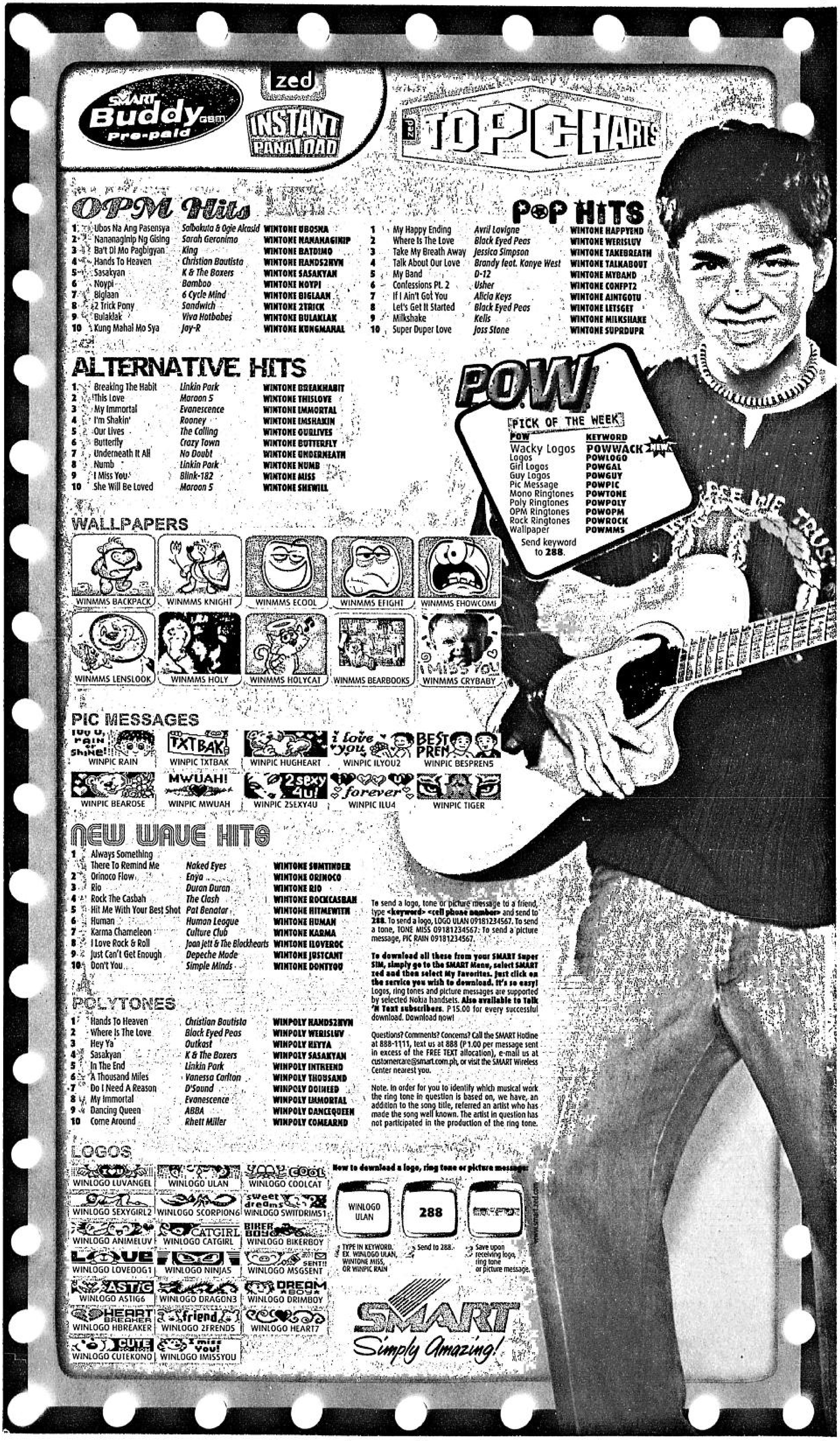
Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain yesterday said an additional P1 million was added to the bonus pot courtesy of Internet service provider Pacific Internet.

The company became the latest corporate sponsor to back the RP bid for gold after Samsung Electronics and Bounty Agro Ventures pledged P1 million each.

The government has set aside P5 million, which is provided for by law.

Buhain said he expects more firms to join the bounty bandwagon in the coming days when the games of the 28th Olympiad in Athens get fully under way.

Sixteen Filipino athletes are competing in the Games, with middleweight boxer Chris Camat plunging into action first on Saturday. *Marc Anthony Reyes*



OPM Hits

1	Ubos Na Ang Pasensya	Salbakuta & Ogie Alcasid	WINTONE UBOSNA
2	Nananaginip Ng Gising	Sarah Geronimo	WINTONE NANANAGINIP
3	Ba't Di Mo Pagbigyan	King	WINTONE BATDIMO
4	Hands To Heaven	Christian Bautista	WINTONE HANDS2HVN
5	Sasakyan	K & The Boxers	WINTONE SASAKYAN
6	Noypi	Bamboo	WINTONE NOYPI
7	Biglaan	6 Cycle Mind	WINTONE BIGLAAN
8	2 Trick Pony	Sandwich	WINTONE 2TRICK
9	Bulaklak	Viva Hotbabes	WINTONE BULAKLAK
10	Kung Mahal Mo Sya	Jay-R	WINTONE KUNGMAHAL

POP HITS

1	My Happy Ending	Avril Lavigne	WINTONE HAPPYEND
2	Where Is The Love	Black Eyed Peas	WINTONE WERISLUV
3	Take My Breath Away	Jessica Simpson	WINTONE TAKEBREATH
4	Talk About Our Love	Brandy feat. Kanye West	WINTONE TALKABOUT
5	My Band	D-12	WINTONE MYBAND
6	Confessions Pt. 2	Usher	WINTONE CONFPT2
7	If I Ain't Got You	Alicia Keys	WINTONE AINTGOTU
8	Let's Get It Started	Black Eyed Peas	WINTONE LETSGET
9	Milkshake	Kelis	WINTONE MILKSHAKE
10	Super Duper Love	Joss Stone	WINTONE SUPRDUPR

ALTERNATIVE HITS

1	Breaking The Habit	Linkin Park	WINTONE BREAKHABIT
2	This Love	Maroon 5	WINTONE THISLOVE
3	My Immortal	Evanescence	WINTONE IMMORTAL
4	I'm Shakin'	Rooney	WINTONE IMSHAKIN
5	Our Lives	The Calling	WINTONE OURLIVES
6	Butterfly	Crazy Town	WINTONE BUTTERFLY
7	Underneath It All	No Doubt	WINTONE UNDERNEATH
8	Numb	Linkin Park	WINTONE NUMB
9	I Miss You	Blink-182	WINTONE MISS
10	She Will Be Loved	Maroon 5	WINTONE SHEWILL

P.O.W.
PICK OF THE WEEK

POW	KEYWORD
Wacky Logos	POWWACK
Logos	POWLOGO
Girl Logos	POWGAL
Guy Logos	POWGUY
Pic Message	POWPIC
Mono Ringtones	POWTONE
Poly Ringtones	POWPOLY
OPM Ringtones	POWOPM
Rock Ringtones	POWROCK
Wallpaper	POWMMS

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PIC MESSAGES
WINPIC RAIN
WINPIC TXTBAK
WINPIC HUGHEART
WINPIC ILYOU2
WINPIC BESPRENS
WINPIC BEAROSE
WINPIC MWUAH
WINPIC 2SEXY4U
WINPIC ILU4
WINPIC TIGER

NEW WAVE HITS

1	Always Something There To Remind Me	Naked Eyes	WINTONE SUMTINDER
2	Orinoco Flow	Enya	WINTONE ORINOCO
3	Rio	Duran Duran	WINTONE RIO
4	Rock The Casbah	The Clash	WINTONE ROCKCASBAH
5	Hit Me With Your Best Shot	Pat Benatar	WINTONE HITMEWITH
6	Human	Human League	WINTONE HUMAN
7	Karma Chameleon	Culture Club	WINTONE KARMA
8	I Love Rock & Roll	Joan Jett & The Blackhearts	WINTONE ILOVEROC
9	Just Can't Get Enough	Depeche Mode	WINTONE JUSTCANT
10	Don't You	Simple Minds	WINTONE DONTYOU

POLYTONES

1	Hands To Heaven	Christian Bautista	WINPOLY HANDS2HVN
2	Where Is The Love	Black Eyed Peas	WINPOLY WERISLUV
3	Hey Ya	Outkast	WINPOLY HEYYA
4	Sasakyan	K & The Boxers	WINPOLY SASAKYAN
5	In The End	Linkin Park	WINPOLY INTHEEND
6	A Thousand Miles	Vanessa Carlton	WINPOLY THOUSAND
7	Do I Need A Reason	D'Sound	WINPOLY DOINEED
8	My Immortal	Evanescence	WINPOLY IMMORTAL
9	Dancing Queen	ABBA	WINPOLY DANCEQUEEN
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Shooters past and present in All-Star duel

CEBU—There is one place where the past and the present will converge in the Philippine Basketball Association All-Stars. It's outside the semicircle that separates the two-point shots from those that count as three.

Allan Caidic, acknowledged as the best shooter the country has ever seen, leads three South-bred gunners as they challenge the present crop of three-point artists in the 2004 PBA All-Star weekend at the Mandaue Sports Complex.

Teaming up with Caidic, winner of the contest during the 1992 edition of the All-Stars, are Cebuano stars who also topped this event not too long ago—Al Solis, Boy Cabahug and Roehl Gomez.

The top four qualifiers in the regular three-point shootout will form the team that will challenge the legends in a winner-take-all team challenge spiced up by a P30,000 pot put up by sports patron Jean Henri Lhuillier.

Competing in Saturday's regular three-point shooting contest are Alaska's Mike Cortez, Coca-Cola's Rob Wainwright, Barangay Ginebra's Mark Caguioa, Purefoods rookie James Yap, Red Bull Barako's Mick Pennisi, San Miguel Beer's Dondon Hontiveros, Shell's Ronald Tubid, Sta. Lucia's Paolo Mendoza, Talk 'N Text's Willie Miller, last year's runner-up Ren-Ren Ritualo of Fedex and defending champion Jimmy Alapag of Talk 'N Text.

Solis, the 1991 champ, was reported to have said that he sees no player who can match against the shooters of old, although Caidic toned down the bravado by saying the current crop have an edge in preparedness.

"They have the edge because they're in shape while we have been inactive for a long time," the 1990 league MVP said in Filipino. "But we'll give the fans something to be happy about."

The All-Star Week kicked off its flurry of activities yesterday as participants of the Skills competition visited the Don Bosco Technical School, Vicente Sotto School and the Cebu City Street Children Foundation for the Kids' Day celebrations.

Today, Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes and his staff conduct the Junior PBA Basketball Clinic at the Don Bosco Technical School gym and the Wheelchair Basketball Clinic at Mandaue Sports Complex. Set in the evening is the PBA Bar Rage where the All-Stars go on a bar-hopping spree.

GUNSLINGERS of old—Allan Caidic, Al Solis and Boy Cabahug—are set to test the skills of today's top shooters led by Jimmy Alapag, Mark Caguioa and Dondon Hontiveros. PDI PHOTO

Baguio five collides with tough Cotta

NORTH division leader Baguio faces its toughest assignment yet when it meets visiting Ozamis Cotta today in the NBC (National Basketball Championship) national championship at the University of Baguio gym.

With a 3-1 win-loss record, the Cardinals, buoyed by their 82-73 win over the Iloilo Warriors last week, will bank on playmaker Jun Balares, Obet Giron, Joseph Roque and Elbert To when they tangle with the Cotta at 6 p.m.

The Cotta (3-3) will enter the game still smarting from a double overtime loss to Tribu Sugbu last week in the event sponsored by Panasonic, PCSO, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Molten, Supercat and Accel.

NBC officials, meanwhile, clarified earlier published reports that former PBA standout Zaldy Realubit has been hired by the Cagayan de Oro Stars.

Noel Zarate, NBC director for basketball operations, said that Realubit has an existing contract with the San Miguel Corp. All-Stars and will be unable to play in the league.

SSC-Cavite still on top

SAN Sebastian College-Cavite City routed Air 21, 121-100, on Monday to remain on top with four straight wins in the National Basketball Developmental League-Danny Espiritu Cup at the Villamor Air Base gym.

Air Force nipped Balfour Beatty, 94-91, to tie their victims in second place at 3-1, while Navy-Red Bull whipped BF Law, 117-97.

STANDINGS FIRST ROUND	W	L
Ateneo	7	0
FEU	5	2
La Salle	4	3
UE	4	3
UST	4	3
Adamson	3	4
UP	1	6
NU	0	7

2 teams leader Ateneo needs to watch out for

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE ATENEO Blue Eagles may have pulled off a seven-game sweep in the first round of the UAAP men's basketball tournament, but there are two teams they should look out for in their title run.

Based on numbers released by PLDT Vibe and Soho Connect, UAAP's official statistician, the league-leader should be wary of the youthful University of the East—which the Eagles will face on Thursday to kick off the second round—and the University of Sto. Tomas.

While La Salle and Ateneo were the best scoring teams with 40.1 percent and 39.6 percent shooting clips, respectively, UE and UST were close by at 38.9 percent. Defending champion Far Eastern U was in seventh place, behind Adamson and University of the Philippines, at 37.2 percent.

The best three-point shooting team was Ateneo, thanks mainly to senior playmaker LA Tenorio. The Eagles sported a 28.9 percent average, but surprisingly, they were again followed by UE at 25.3 and UST at 24.3.

The Warriors and the Tigers, who weren't even among the preseason favorites because of their young rosters and rookie coaches, also figured prominently in the assist department. The Tamaraws were on top with a 15.1 average, followed by the Eagles and the Tigers who were tied at 13.7. The Warriors were next at 12.7.

The best defensive team was Adamson, which limited their opponents to only 60 points per game. Ateneo averaged 61.4, followed by La Salle (65.4) and FEU (65.7).

Ateneo and FEU led in block shots with 31 each, but UE and UST were again at their heels with 29 apiece.

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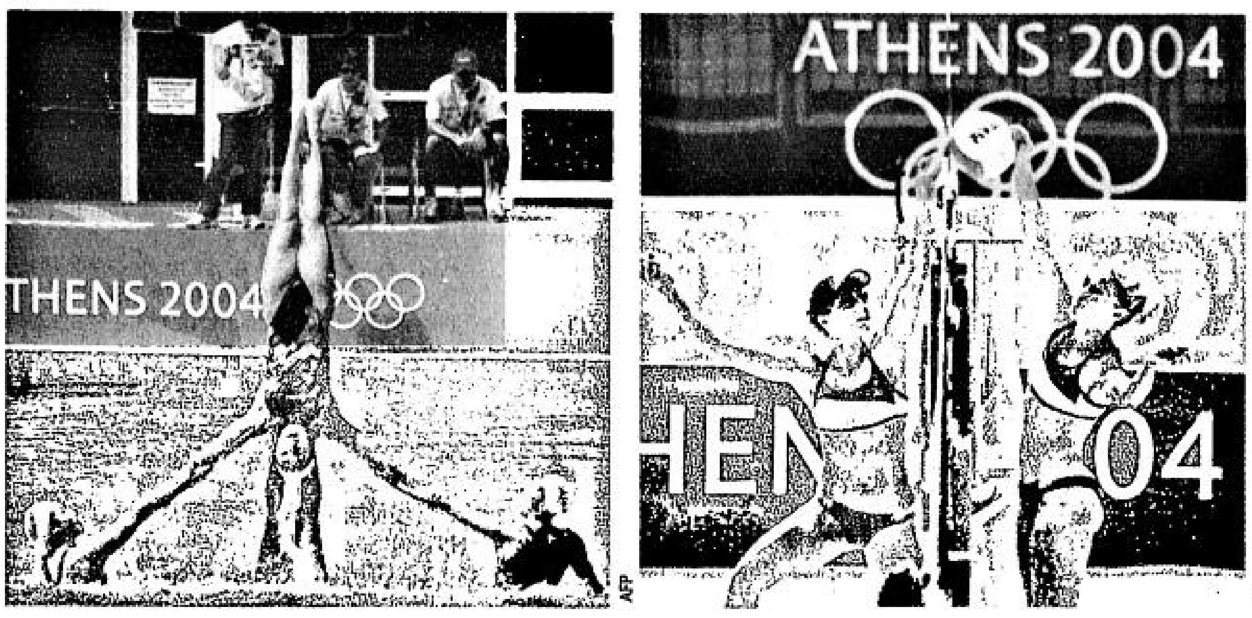

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT
The Japanese synchronized swimming team rehearses its program while Australians Nicole Sanderson and Kerri Pottharst prepare for the beach volleyball competition. Both teams are favorites in the 2004 Athens Olympics.

GM-hopeful Paragua rules Italy rapid tilt

INTERNATIONAL Master Mark Paragua proved his supremacy in the rapid time control by ruling the 2004 Annual Camporosso International Rapid Chess Championship in Camporosso, Italy, recently.

Paragua scored seven points out of a possible eight to edge out a field that included five grandmasters and a dozen IMs.

Croatian GM Mladen Palac finished second while his compatriot, GM Davor Komljenovic, finished third. GM Igor Miladinovic of Greece was fourth, while GM Nenad Sulava of Croatia was fifth.

Paragua, currently the No. 1-ranked player in the country with an ELO rating of 2529, is scheduled to compete in three tough GM tournaments in Alustha, Ukraine, from Aug. 27 to Oct. 3, 2004, before going back to Europe for the 2004 Corsica Chess Master Open from Oct. 25-Nov. 4 in Corsica, France.

Paragua obtained his first GM norm after finishing in a tie for first with GM Oleg Korneev of Russia in the 2001 Mondariz International Chess Tournament in Spain. The 20-year-old Paragua needs two GM norms/results to become the youngest-ever grandmaster in the country. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

Woods ties Norman's No. 1 record

PHILADELPHIA—Tiger Woods matched Greg Norman's record for total weeks atop the Official World Golf Ranking. This week was the 331st week Woods was No. 1 and he will break the mark if he is able to hang on to the top spot after this week's PGA Championship.

That won't be as easy now that No. 2 Ernie Els is closer than anyone has ever gotten. Vijay Singh, who won the Buick Open two weeks ago, held on to third while reigning Masters champion Phil Mickelson and 1997 PGA champion Davis Love III rounded out the Top five.

Retief Goosen, who withdrew from the PGA after a jet-ski accident, stayed in sixth. Mike Weir, Padraig Harrington, Jim Furyk and Sergio Garcia completed the Top 10.

Kenny Perry and Adam Scott switched places from last week. The American jumped up to 11th, while the young Australian dipped one to No. 12. Chad Campbell, Darren Clarke and Stuart Appleby held their spots from last week. *Reuters*

Romeo and Juliet: a Greek tragedy

ATHENS—She saved him from drugs and he loved her almost to death—it's a Romeo and Juliet tragedy updated for the Athens Olympics.

A lovers' tiff prompted Greek Olympic judoka Eleni Ioannou to jump off the balcony of the flat she shared with her boyfriend on Saturday, six days before the Games' opening ceremony.

Guilt drove Giorgos Chrisostomidis to a copy-cat jump two days later. Both are in hospital fighting for their lives after the three-story fall.

According to Apogevmatini daily which ran the story under a headline of "They are fighting death for their love," the couple had been living together for more than one and a half years.

The young man, who lost his father at a young age and was raised by his grandparents, was a drug addict until he met Ioannou, who supported him and got him into de-tox.

As a former drug addict, he had trouble getting a job, with Ioannou his major ally and source of consolation. *Reuters*

RACING TIPS

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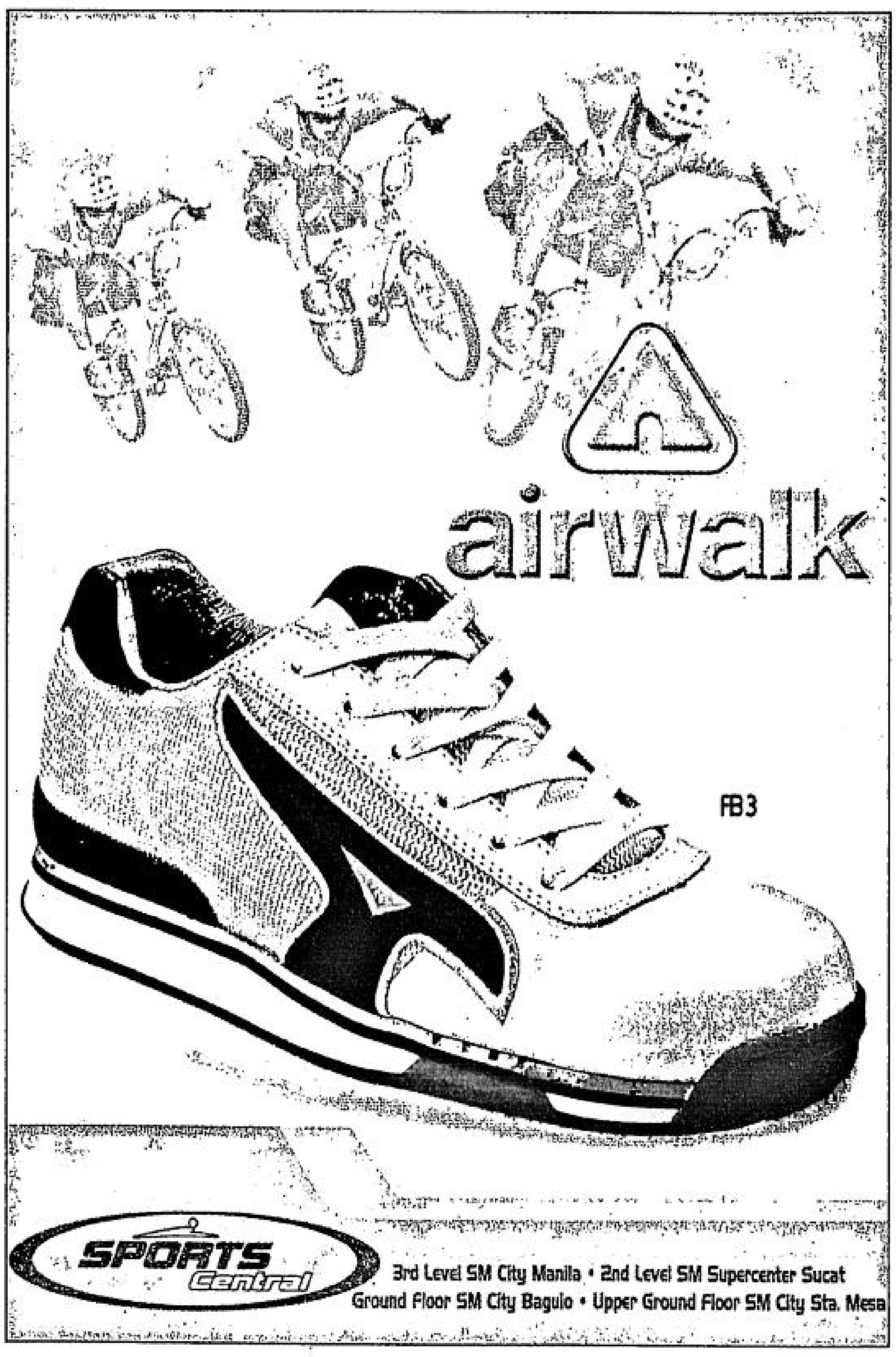
Race 1—1. Great Hill 2. Glory Allelujia 3. Ongbee 4. Three of Heart
Race 2—1. Bullish Dream 2. Going Strike 3. Aaron's Hope 4. Hukom 5. Power Dance
Race 3—1. St. Emilion 2. Free Hand 3. Terminal Bound 4. Guts/Ocean Magic
Race 4—1. Kenkay 2. Dow Jones 3. Demolition Jack 4. Once and for All 5. Reverie
Race 5—1. Southern Prince 2. Speed Emperor 3. Gliding Speed 4. Mary Jane Bomb/Maraya's Fantasy 5. Heart of the Wind
Race 6—1. Speed King 2. Gigi's Gold 3. Tribeca 4. Family Day 5. Winning Prize
Race 7—1. Ceasar's Inn 2. Gorgie Girl 3. Ganda 4. G Square
Race 8—1. Holy King 2. Firenze Rose 3. Strong Colony 4. Field Star 5. Secret Quest 6. Britney's Magic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Erlinda I. Bautista
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Davao del Sur

8 2nd PRIZES
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Security Supvr., 49
Valenzuela City

Josefino M. Manzano
Machine Optr., 51
Libis, Q.C.

Francisca Galuba
Housewife, 65
La Trinidad, Benguet

Jaime M. Marzo
Businessman, 50
Pangasinan

Uldarico O. Codillero Jr.
Admin. Officer, 49
Cebu City

Rita Pama
Store Owner, 62
Negros Occidental

Eufemio Bernales
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STANDINGS	W	L
Perpetual	6	3
Letran	5	3
SSC	5	3
Mapua	5	4
PCU	5	4
San Beda	5	4
JRU	3	5
St. Benilde	0	8

GAMES TODAY (*Rizal Coliseum*)
11:30 a.m.—Letran vs JRU (Jrs)
2 p.m.—Letran vs JRU (Srs)
4 p.m.—SSC vs St. Benilde (Srs)
6 p.m.—SSC vs St. Benilde (Jrs)

Knights, Stags seek share of lead

PERENNIAL favorites Letran Knights and San Sebastian Stags aim for a share of the top spot when they battle separate foes today in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Rizal Coliseum.

The Knights square off with the Jose Rizal Bombers at 2 p.m., while the Stags face the St. Benilde Blazers at 4 p.m.

Although Ronjay Enrile, an MVP candidate, makes Letran a favorite in the match, JRU has shown flashes of its might with upsets over league-leader University of Perpetual Help and San Sebastian in the first round.

JRU is headed by the backcourt tandem of Marco Fajardo and Wynsjohn Te, plus dominating forward McDo Santos. Fajardo, who missed four games early in the season due to injury, averages 18.2 points.

"We have to limit the point production of Fajardo, Te and Santos," said Knights coach Louie Alas. "And ever since Fajardo came back, they've become a transition team and having up-tempo games."

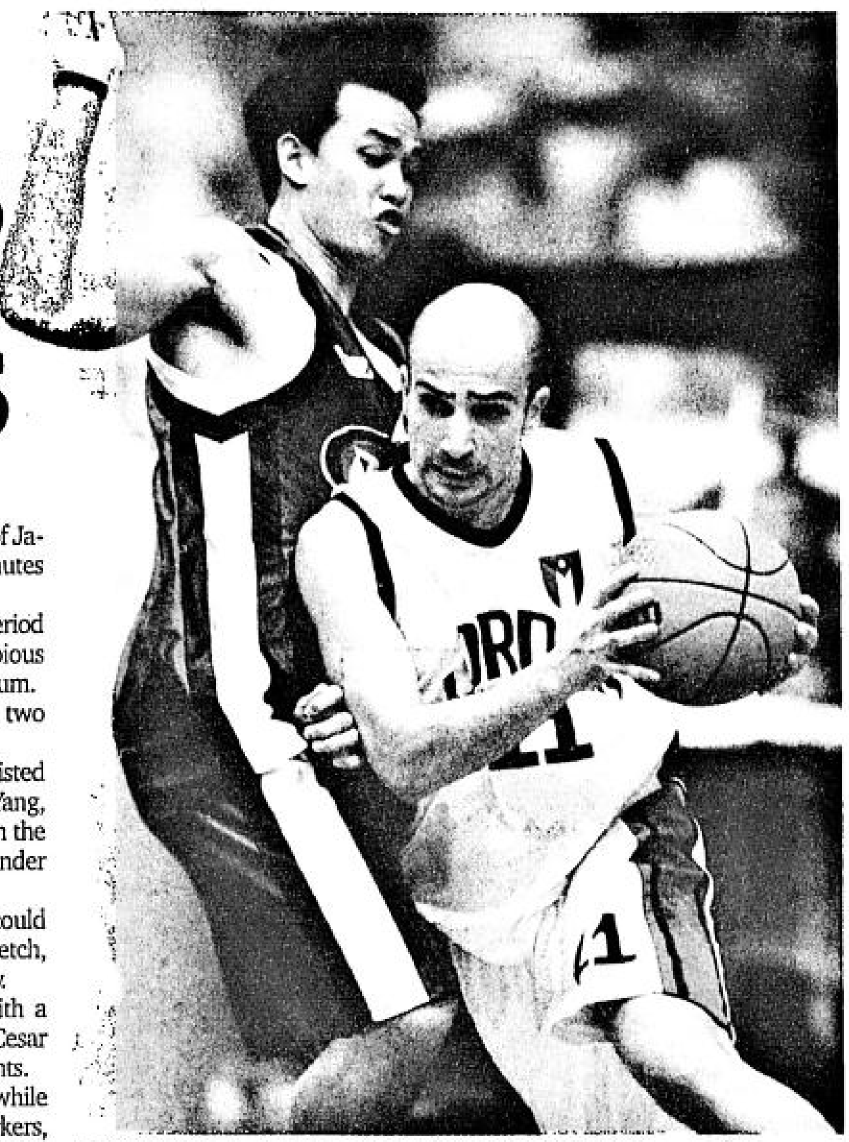
San Sebastian, too, isn't taking the winless St. Benilde for granted.

"We can never relax. *Dikit-dikit lahat sa* standings (everyone's close to each other in the standings)," said Stags coach Turo Valenzona.

Last season's MVP, Leo Najorda, is currently ranked fourth in the MVP race with 12.6 ppg and 7.9 rpg and the Stags forward will be facing two Blazers who are ahead of him in the statistical race. Ernie Sagad emerged on top with 14.6 points and 10.6 rebounds per game, while Paolo Orbeta ranked third with 18.3 ppg and 6.6 rpg. *Jasmine W. Payo*

QATAR CAGING

PBL five bows to Jordanians



JORDAN'S Faisal al-Nsur (right) drives off Mark Macapagal. AFP

DOHA, QATAR—Team PBL fell short of a breakthrough victory but gained confidence that it can still make something out of its goodwill mission to this tiny Middle Eastern nation.

The month-old selection battled the Jordan National Team on even terms before yielding a 73-77 decision Monday at the close of its classification round assignments.

Some questionable calls in the second half, which led to the ejection of coach Junel Baculi, along with faulty freethrow shooting by the Filipinos kept them from notching their first win in three games.

Team PBL's remarkable improvement, coupled by Qatar's 61-64 loss to Egypt later in the night, made Baculi optimistic that come Wednesday evening's pivotal knockout semifinal with Egypt, his players would already know what to do to exact vengeance and gain the final.

Team PBL razed Jordan's 30-19 lead and took control at 36-33 behind the outside sniping of Jason Misolas and Mark Macapagal, three minutes left before the half.

Jordan regained the lead in the third period when the Egyptian referee started calling dubious fouls on the Filipinos, who lost their momentum.

When Baculi protested, he was assessed two technical fouls and tossed out.

Assistant coach Robert Sison took over, assisted on the bench by team manager Bernard Yang, and with Chester Tolomia hitting his stride in the fourth quarter, cut the lead to 73-69, with under two minutes to play.

The Filipinos forced some turnovers but could not convert on key possessions down the stretch, allowing the Jordanians to pull off the victory.

Misolas hit three triples and finished with a team-high 15 points, while Viva teammate Cesar Catli also had three three-pointers for 14 points.

Marvin Ortiguerra added 12 points, while Macapagal and Tolomia each had ten markers, Tolomia scoring all his points in the fourth period.

SEAG supremacy final goal—Buhain

BUHAIN: Start from scratch

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission chair Eric R. Buhain yesterday urged Filipino athletes to look up to their Olympian compatriots as models and inspiration as they prepare for the country's campaign for the overall championship in next year's Southeast Asian Games.

On the eve of his departure to Athens as government observer in the Olympics, Buhain enjoined the athletes who did not make it to the Olympic delegation to strive even harder.

"We are striving hard to win a gold medal, but what is equally important is for us to develop more Olympians in the future who will come from this young batch that we have right now," said the PSC chief.

"Once in our lives we also dreamed of taking our Olympic slots and I am sure many of those young athletes that we have now are dreaming of the same," Buhain said.

"But we will have to start from scratch after these Games are over and focus all our attention on our drive to win the overall championship of the SEA Games.

Sports stars backstop Southwoods clinics

THE FIL-ESTATE Sports Foundation Inc. (FESFI) will hold swimming, tennis and golf lessons at the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona, Cavite, beginning Sept. 11.

FESFI chair and Manila Southwoods president Robert John L. Sobrepeña said he has tapped three of the leading practitioners of the sports— Gertrudez "Tuding" Lozada (swimming), Manny Tecson (tennis) and Bong Lopez (golf)—to help the foundation provide prospective students extensive lessons in their chosen sport.

"With the three leading sports practitioners assisting us in realizing the foundation's long-time goals and objectives, we are confident that we can help develop local sports, especially in the discovery of fresh talents who can excel in the sporting arena someday," said Sobrepeña.

Lozada was the first ever Filipina swimmer to represent the country in the Olympic Games in Melbourne, Australia, in 1956.

Interested enrollees can call Lozada at 8052780, Tecson at 9389522 and 9394851 or Jerry Tripulca at 6370100 loc. 7021 or 0917-8981516.

SPORTSWATCH

RP fighter loses OPBF bid

PHILIPPINE junior flyweight king Bert Batawang failed in his bid to snatch the Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation belt, losing via a split decision to titleholder Shingo Yamaguchi of Japan in 12 rounds at the Korakuen Hall last Monday. Yamaguchi reportedly frustrated the hard-punching but slower Batawang en route to a 116-113, 117-113 win. Filipino fight judge Ben Necesario scored it 115-113 for Batawang. ***Salven L. Lagumbay***

Floro Nival tourney set

ELECTROBUS Consolidated Inc., the Philippine representative of Callaway Golf USA, and the country's senior professional golfers will honor the late Floro Nival with a golf tournament on Aug. 18-20 at the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club. Engineer Antonio Herrera Jr., executive vice president of the highly diversified, family owned company, said that ECI Golf is supporting the event to perpetuate the memory of Nival, former president of the Senior Professional Golfers Association of the Philippines (SPGAP). "This is our humble way of giving honor and recognition to a humble man who spent his life for golf and showed to his peers how to live a decent and dignified life through the sport," Herrera said. Dubbed as the 1st Floro Nival Memorial, the tournament will consist of a 36-hole event for both senior and super senior professionals capped by a one-day pro-am on the third day in which amateurs will draw their professional partners by lots. Friends of the late teaching pro who would like to support the event may call SPGAP secretary Jun Hizo at 0916-2827088.

CPU alumni golf slated

THE ILOILO Golf and Country Club plays host to the third Central Philippine University Alumni Invitational tournament on Sept. 3, 4 and 5. The 36-hole tournament, to be disputed over two days at the country's oldest golf club in Sta. Barbara town, will be held in cooperation with the CPU Alumni Golfers Association and the CPU Alumni Association, headed by Francis U. Griño and Dr. Glenn A.M. Catedral, respectively. Tournament fee is P8,000. For inquiries, call the IGCC, telefax 5239778 and look for Lenny.

LPC stag screening on

SCREENING of stags has started for the annual Las Piñas 6-Stag Derby slated Aug. 24 and 26 at the Las Piñas Coliseum with Pagcor-Casino Filipino Parañaque and Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as sponsors. Participants may bring their stags to the LPC office every Saturday and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Stags eight to 10 months old will be bracketed into four classifications to make sure that matched entries are of the same age. To be hosted by Mayor Nene Aguilar, the stagfest stakes a cash prize of P1 million on an entry fee of P15,000. The champions will receive two brand-new motorcycles. Meanwhile, a 2-cock derby to be hosted by Yoyoy Dahonog gets going at 7 p.m. today. Entry fee is P3,300. For inquiries, call 8731040, 8743910 or 0920-5609404.

Mendoza entry perfect

ROOSTERS bred by Arthur Mendoza in his Golden Warrior Farm in Agoncillo, Batangas, took Quezon province by storm, scoring a perfect slate in record time and bagging the championship in the 3rd Roann's Cup Annual Stag Derby at the Emralino Coliseum in Candelaria town. Hosted by cocker-businessman Romano Castillo of Tiaong, Quezon, the event drew 48 tough entries from Quezon and the neighboring provinces. The Golden Warrior team was composed of Mendoza, handler Bert Martinez (handler), conditioner Jun Tordecilla and gaffer Gildo Marino. A school friend of popular cocker Sonny Lagon, Mendoza has won several derby crowns, including a 5-cocker in Pampanga last May.

Generals, Jaguars shock rivals

HOST Emilio Aguinaldo College and National College of Business and Arts posted similar hard-earned victories against highly touted opponents yesterday in the 3rd Universities and Colleges Athletics Association (UCAA) seniors basketball tournament at the EAC Sports Center.

The Generals rallied from a double-digit, third-quarter deficit to prevail over Philippine School of Business Administration Jaguars, 74-71, for a share of the lead with NCBA in this eight-school meet backed by New Balance shoes, Arena swimwear, Accel, Villa de Oro Resorts Boracay, Shakey's Pizza, Molten and Mikasa balls.

The NCBA Wildcats also notched their second straight win at the expense of the defending champion St. Francis Doves, 82-74, in a game that was decided only in the final five minutes.

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Olympic Trivia:

1896 MODERN GAMES (Revival Year)

The first modern Games were hardly an international competition. Only 13 nations took part, and just over 300 athletes, more than two-thirds being Greek. Although Gold signified the highest achievement of the Olympics, at the first modern games, silver medals were awarded to the winners and bronze to the second place getters.

Catch all the action from Aug 13 to 29 on NBN 4

Delight or debacle in Athens Olympics

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

WILL we finally be able to fondle one and know the exact weight of an Olympic gold medal?

Our top sports officials, mainly the Philippine Olympic Committee president and the chair of the Philippine Sports Commission, say that the 80-year-long Olympic gold drought could end for RP this year.

Those were very bold predictions.

But then, who doesn't want an Olympic gold medal for the country?

This has become a consuming obsession over here.

Out there, the hosts were said to have used 33 kilos of the expensive metal to mint all the gold medals for the 31 events in the Athens Olympics, last held in the Greek capital in 1896.

***

Historians say that no gold medals were given out in early Olympiads, maybe to keep the Games from being tinged with commercialism.

It was likewise noted that Olympic champions used to be decorated with a laurel wreath, and much later awarded with only a silver medal.

We all know that the Philippines has won a total of two Olympic silver medals, in Tokyo 1964 and Atlanta 1996, both courtesy of our boxers.

Unfortunately, two silver medals don't make a gold, so the frantic hunt resumes in Athens starting Friday when the torch for the 28th Olympiad is lit.

***

As in the past, the great task of chasing the elusive gold has been given the boxing team, which sadly was able to send only four fighters into the competition proper.

Our taekwondo jins, who have never won an official Olympic medal, have also been touted as gold-medal potentials.

Sports officials based this rosy assessment of taekwondo on the team's strong showing in recent world competitions.

For the record, our boxers have not scored anything big in their foreign stints this year on their way to Athens.

A few months back, our top hopes fell victim to Athens-bound simonpures from Cuba and Europe in a box-off that, more or less, showed that it would be an uphill crawl for RP boxers in this year's Olympics.

***

Not to dampen official enthusiasm, but the boxing team would've had a bigger chance of at least moving into the medal round had it succeeded in pushing in two or three more fighters into the Olympic proper.

Three fighters, tiny Violito Payla and musclemen Romeo Brin and Chris Camat earned Olympic berths in the Palawan qualifier.

Ironically, Harry Tañamor, who made it only in a succeeding try, has been picked by international experts, including Sports Illustrated, as the only possible RP medal winner.

But he was rated, at best, good only for a bronze.

***

We don't talk about a medal for anybody in the RP swimming and athletics teams.

Middleweight Chris Camat has been lined up to fight on Saturday.

On Sunday, it will be Brin's turn to start campaigning in his third Olympics.

However, both Camat and Brin have to outdo themselves as they don't practically belong to their respective divisions.

They are both too small for their categories which are ruled by chiseled, perfectly built scientific fighters from other continents.

Of course, Brin and Camat would be lucky not to be pitted promptly against world-rated opponents.

But do remember that there are practically no second-rate boxers in the Olympics proper.

***

Just keep your fingers crossed that the next two smaller RP boxers, Payla and Tañamor, don't bump into rated would-be champs in their first assignments.

At least, unlike with Camat and Brin, these tinier campaigners are more secure in the Asian division, the flyweight and light flyweight brackets, where Orientals have aptly shown their mettle and won in past Olympiads.

Now, would a bronze for either Payla or Tañamor be good enough after rosy predictions of a possible gold?

A silver medal could indeed again keep us awake all night long, as had happened for Onyok Velasco when he fought in the light flyweight final in Atlanta.

A repeat of the debacle in the Sydney Games, where RP got no medals, would, however, result into another diagnosis of RP sports ills.

Definitely sick, tired and useless.

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To enhance the online entertainment experience of its subscribers, PLDT myDSL recently doubled the speeds it offers its subscribers.

With PLDT myDSL, downloading your favorite song, which usually takes hours, will now take just a minute or two. Short video clips can be seamlessly streaming on your video screen in seconds, and you can play hours of online games with other gamers worldwide in real time.

"We've started to change the landscape of online entertainment," said Butch Jimenez, head of PLDT's retail business group.

"We envision more and more people hooking up to PLDT myDSL as the entertainment experience is enriched via the Internet," Jimenez added.

SHOW STOPPER

Juliana Palermo reveals naughty, sexy 'Secrets'

THIS must be the most daring talk show ever produced. A sexy actress in lingerie or in a two-piece bikini interviews guests in a bath tub; sexy actresses in their sleepwear reveal their secrets; and sizzling issues on romance, relationships and sex are discussed.

Hosted by Juliana Palermo, the show is called "Secrets" and is ABC 5's newest prime-time TV show, to air every Tuesday and Thursday starting on Aug. 17.

"Secrets" is far from being tasteless, offensive or vulgar, according to its host. It might be sexy but the issues it will tackle don't get raunchy even when they can be naughty at times, she says.

The producers of "Secrets" make sure that when sensitive issues are tackled, always present are professionals, such as doctors as guests, to lend insight to Juliana's forums.

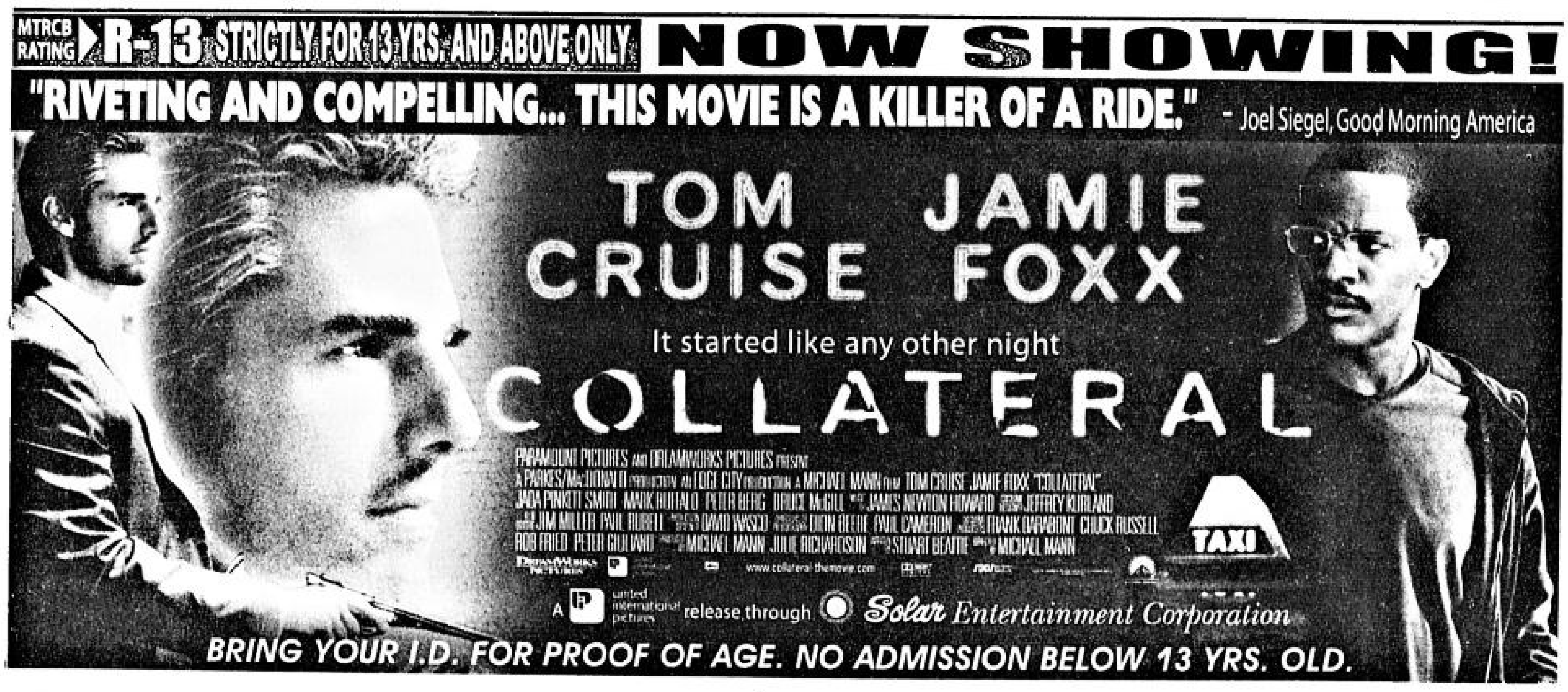
The producers said Juliana was hired for her candidness, her experience in giving advice as a former columnist of FHM, and her spontaneity. Though the taping of the first episode of "Secrets" included a lot of words from Juliana that would be bleeped when it airs, everything else went on as planned, they said.

In that episode, sexy actress Patricia Javier reveals much of her own naughtiness in a phone call, and comedian Gary Lising discusses sex toys. Other guests are actresses Andrea del Rosario and Stella L.

The episode also discusses cyber-sex. Dr. Cristina Gates offers clinical explanations on why certain people use the Internet for sexual purposes.

"This is really me," Juliana said of herself hosting the new show, even as she stresses that she is no "sex expert." "I think no one can say that he or she is an expert on this matter. Maybe since I am vocal and very open about things, people think I'm an 'expert.' I'm actually pressured that people think I always talk about sex!

"I'm still conservative," she added, whether you believe it or not.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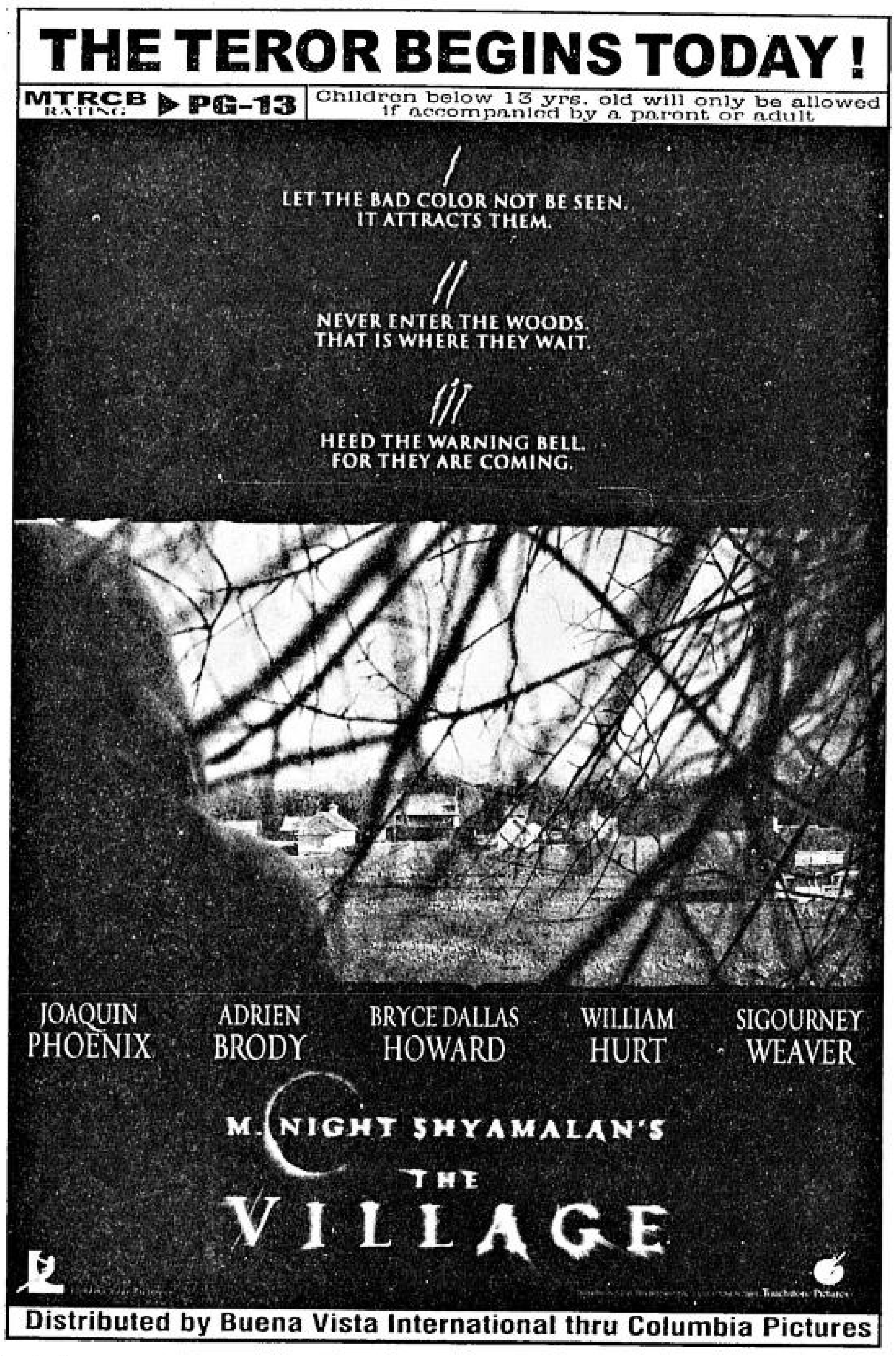
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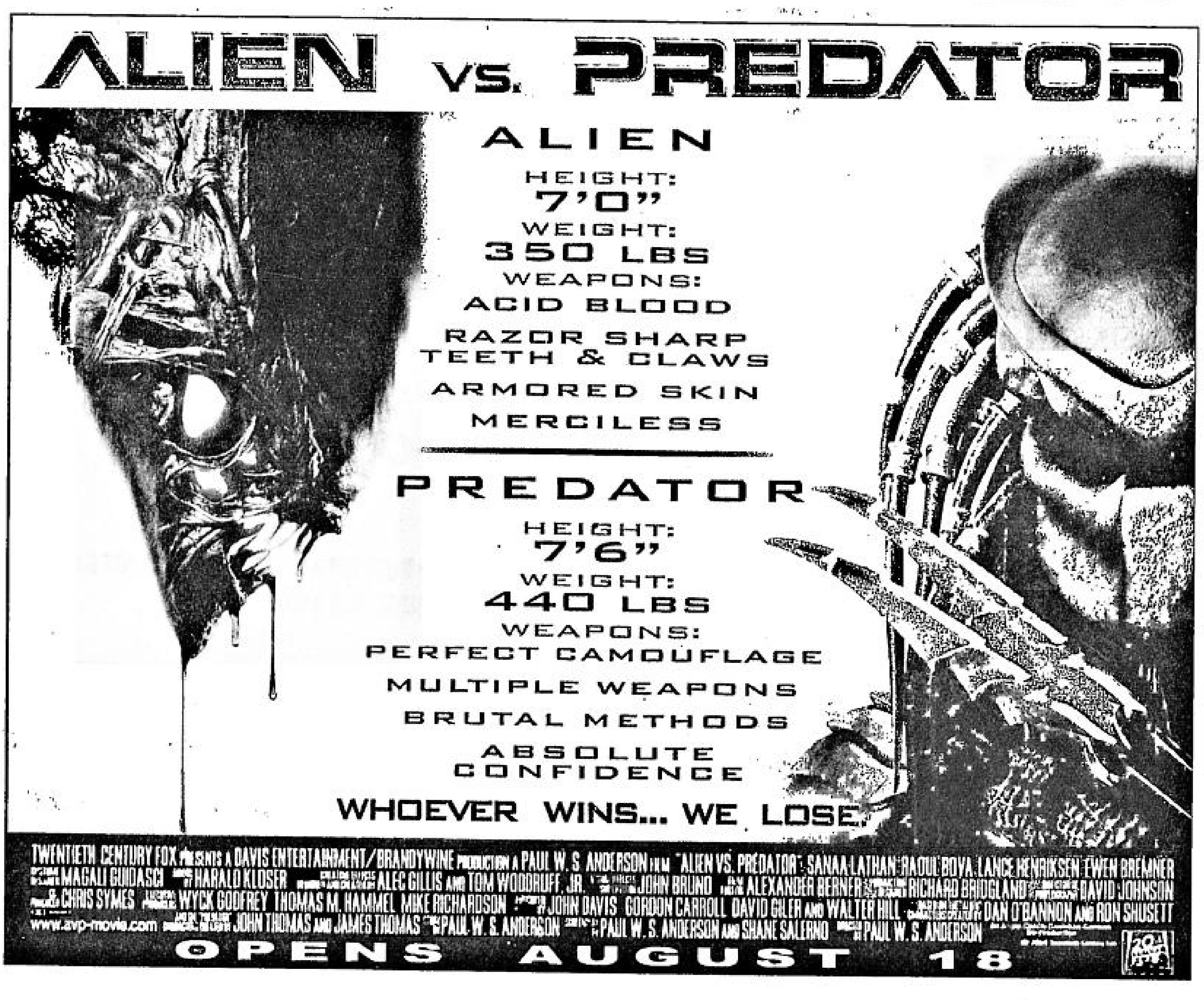
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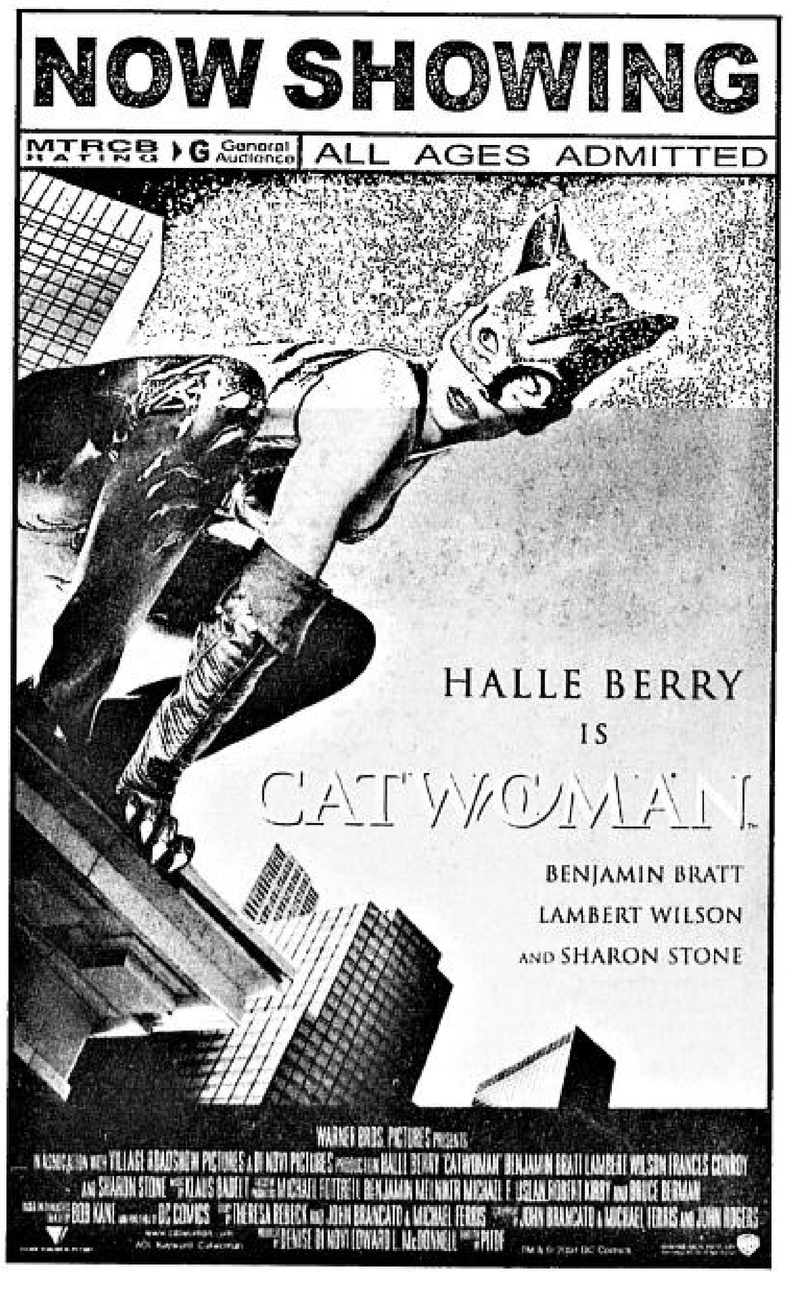
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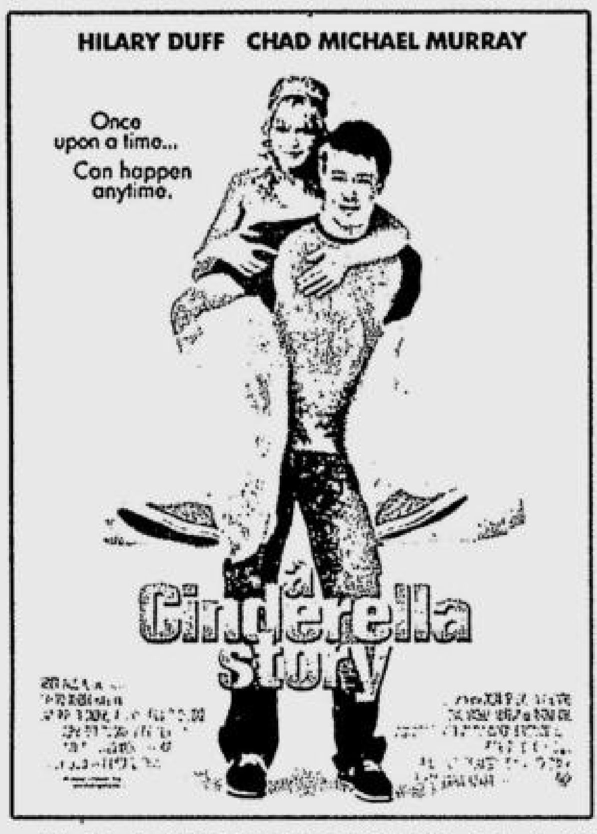
2 A CINDERELLA STORY	2 THE VILLAGE	2 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 THE VILLAGE 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9:05, 11:20	2 THE WHOLE 10 YARDS
3 COLLATERAL	3 A CINDERELLA STORY	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 COLLATERAL 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 ETERNAL SUNSHINE 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	3 COLLATERAL
4 GARFIELD	4 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	4 COLLATERAL	GUARANTEED SEATS 4 COLLATERAL 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00	4 PRINCE & ME
5 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU		5 GARFIELD	GUARANTEED SEATS 5 COLLATERAL 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:15	5 GARFIELD
		6 THE VILLAGE		
		7 SYLVIA		

GB1 GREENBELT 1	
1	COLLATERAL 11:45, 2:10, 4:35, 7:00, 9:25
2	THE VILLAGE 11:20, 1:20, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05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Seedling rivalry, a step in stone and other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

QUIZMASTER: *Kung kay* **Freddie Aguilar** *ang* "Anak," *kanino naman ang* "Laki sa Layaw"?

Contestant: *Jeprox!*

(No, **Mike Hanopol.**)

***

Quizmaster: *Ang* CD *ay* compact disc, *ang* TV *ay* television—*ano naman ang* tuberculosis?

Contestant: *Sakit!*

(No, TB!)

***

Quizmaster: *Saang* sport *sikat si* Bong Coo?

Contestant: Taekwondo!

(No, bowling!)

Quizmaster: *Ilan ang sungay ng* unicorn?

Contestant: *Dalawa.*

(*Isa lang po—kaya siya tinatawag na* uni, *ano?*)

Quizmaster: *Kailan nag-umpisa ang* "Eat Bulaga"?

Contestant: 1949 o 1950!

(*Pinatatanda mo naman nang sobra-sobra sina* Tito, Vic and Joey!)

Quizmaster: *Ang* bronco *sa* rodeo, *ano'ng klaseng hayop?*

Contestant: Buffalo!

(No, horse!)

***

Host: What makes your shop's flower arrangements so popular these days?

Guest: Maybe because our flowers, imported *na gawa dito sa atin.*

(Make up your mind!)

***

Host: What is the target market of your new album?

Guest: It's for everybody, a celebration of womanhood in all its forms—boy, girl, *bakla, tomboy!*

(Womanhood includes boys?!)

***

Host: What are your favorite pets?

Guest: Oh, I really love dogs!

Host: How old is the oldest pet dog you have now?

Guest: 16 years old—*pero namatay na siya.*

(Grrr!)

***

Host: What will stop you from pushing through with the case that you have filed against your detractors?

Guest: The truth has to come out, no more cover-ups. Somebody has to go in front that I'm really the one the offended party!

(Uh, please repeat?)

***

Host: What are you prepared to do to get them to do that?

Guest: Anything, anything *para ma*-break *ang* silent *nila!*

(*Ay, ang* silent *nila!*)

***

Host: *Ano ang panawagan niyo sa kasong ito?*

Guest: *Isa lang: Sa kabilang panig,* go through proper channels. Please don't file your evident before the media!

(*Isa ka pa!*)

***

Host: Do you come from a big family?

Guest: Yes, we are nine kids.

Host: Was that good for you? Did you like growing up with many brothers and sisters?

Guest: It was good. The only problem was there was a lot of seedling rivalry.

(*Ay*, seedling rivalry!)

***

Host: What did you finish in college?

Guest: I graduated as a computer science.

(*Sige na nga . . .*)

***

Host: Is this part of your plan for the future, to put up your own company?

Guest: Of course. It is only just a step in stone!

(*Ay*, a step in stone!)

***

Host: What do you do to make your fans happy?

Guest: I treat them like humans, not like fans.

(Wheee!)

***

Host: If your fans are shy, do you make the first move?

Guest: I do, if they hesitate.

Host: What do you do?

Guest: I just hi them nicely.

(Hi you nicely, yourself!)

DID YOU KNOW...

Past midnight of Aug. 10, actresses **Alessandra de Rossi** and **Iza Calzado** and two other girl friends were eating at Cafe Adriatico in Eastwood. A kibitzer overheard Alessandra saying that a condo sales rep was offering her a unit for P15,000 a month but that after a month the price would double, plus the utility bills, or a total of P60,000 for three months. Iza was quietly listening while munching on her fruits.

Less movies, more politics...

From page A29

make sure that whatever the President's plans are for the next six years will take effect as soon as possible for the Filipino people."

The eldest son of President Macapagal-Arroyo has already been breathing and living politics even before he joined the game. He has always been with his mother, as a personal assistant, ever since she became senator.

Even while making movies, he worked hard at being Pampanga vice governor, particularly serving both the youth and the elderly.

As a first-term congressman, Mikey says he will do his share in healing the nation and pushing it forward.

"It's time for us to reach out to all sectors of society, rich and poor, to unite and continue the task of making our country a strong republic. To achieve progress, we must help one another. This is no longer a competition between foes but a unification of the people for the sake of peace and growth.

"Enough of mud-slinging. Let's work for the betterment of our people."

He wants laws that will benefit the working class, including teachers, barangay captains, farmers and others.

"It's all about creating economic progress, where all get their fair share," Mikey says.

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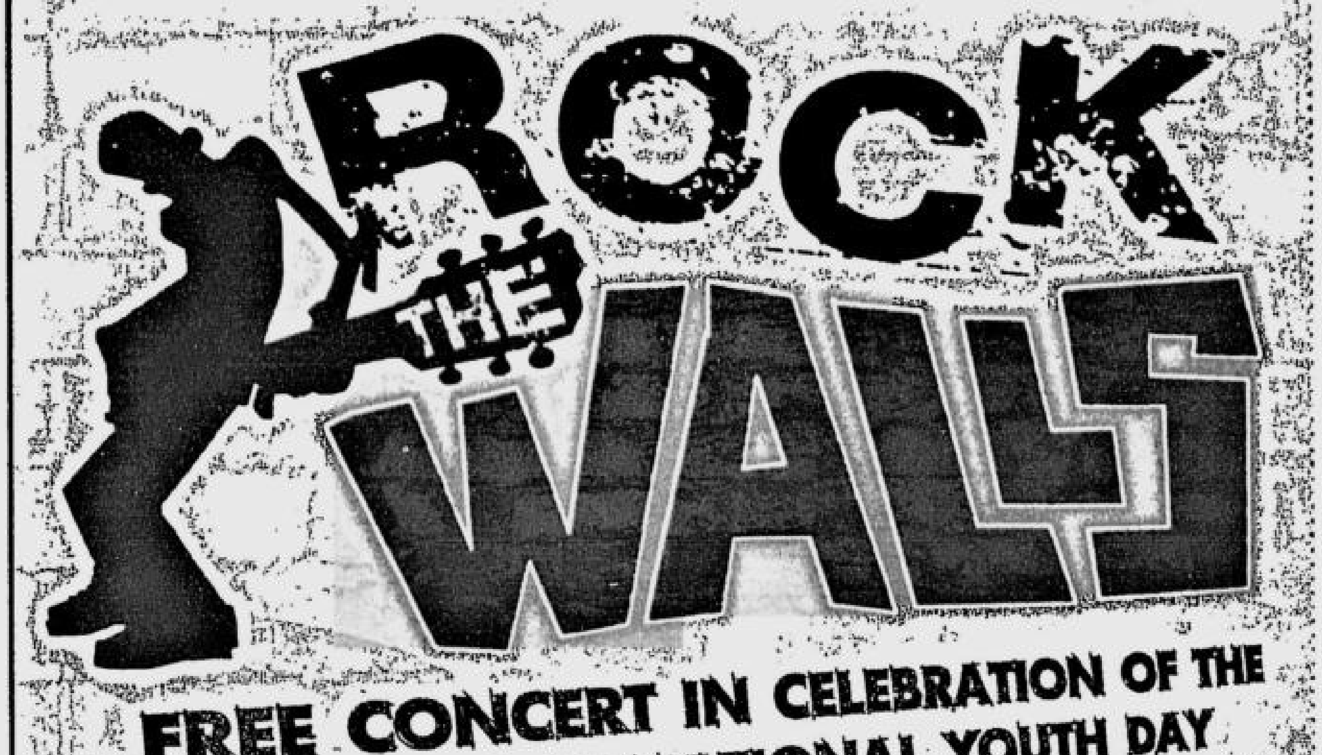

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Editor Louie C. Camino

'T-word' leads to 2-month suspension

By Jocelyn Valle
Contributor
and Alexa H. Bacay

"EAT Bulaga" viewers won't see Joey de Leon, one of the noontime show's hosts, for two months starting tomorrow. The show's producers have suspended him after the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board caught the comedian using "foul language/double meaning words" on the show.

According to MTRCB Chair Marissa Laguardia, the "Eat Bulaga" producer, Television and Production Exponent Inc. (TAPE), has promised that in case De Leon commits a similar offense, he will be suspended for six months.

Tape also requested De Leon to make a public apology for saying the vulgar word, and not to make statements that would make light of his suspension.

De Leon did not comment when Inquirer Entertainment contributor Jocelyn Valle tried to get his side yesterday afternoon. Instead of getting the host's comment, she got shoved by Tape security men, along with fans who were milling around De Leon's car outside the Tape studio at the Broadway Centrum in Quezon City.

Special agents of the MTRCB Monitoring and Inspection unit said in an incident report that during the "TKO" contest on "Eat Bulaga" last July 29, De Leon told a gay contestant, "*Pag 'di nasagot, i-tsupa,*" to which the contestant replied, "*Ah... sarap.*"

The word is a Filipino slang for fellatio.

De Leon was with co-host Vic Sotto during the incident, according to the MTRCB agents.

The incident report to Laguardia noted that although "Eat Bulaga" carried a "Parental Guidance" warning onscreen, "said TV program appeared to be objectionable due to some foul language/double meaning words uttered by TV host Mr. Joey de Leon during 'TKO' contest."

In replying to the MTRCB complaint, Tape president and CEO Antonio P. Tuviera said, "We reaffirm our commitment to undertake self-regulatory measures to ensure that our programs do not contravene Presidential Decree No. 1986 and the rules and regulations issued by the MTRCB."

"Their (TAPE's) commitment is that the next time the incident is repeated, they will suspend the host not only for two months but for six months," Laguardia told Inquirer Entertainment on the phone. "Joey will publicly apologize on the show. When the jokes of the hosts are becoming green, the show will go on a commercial break even if unscheduled."

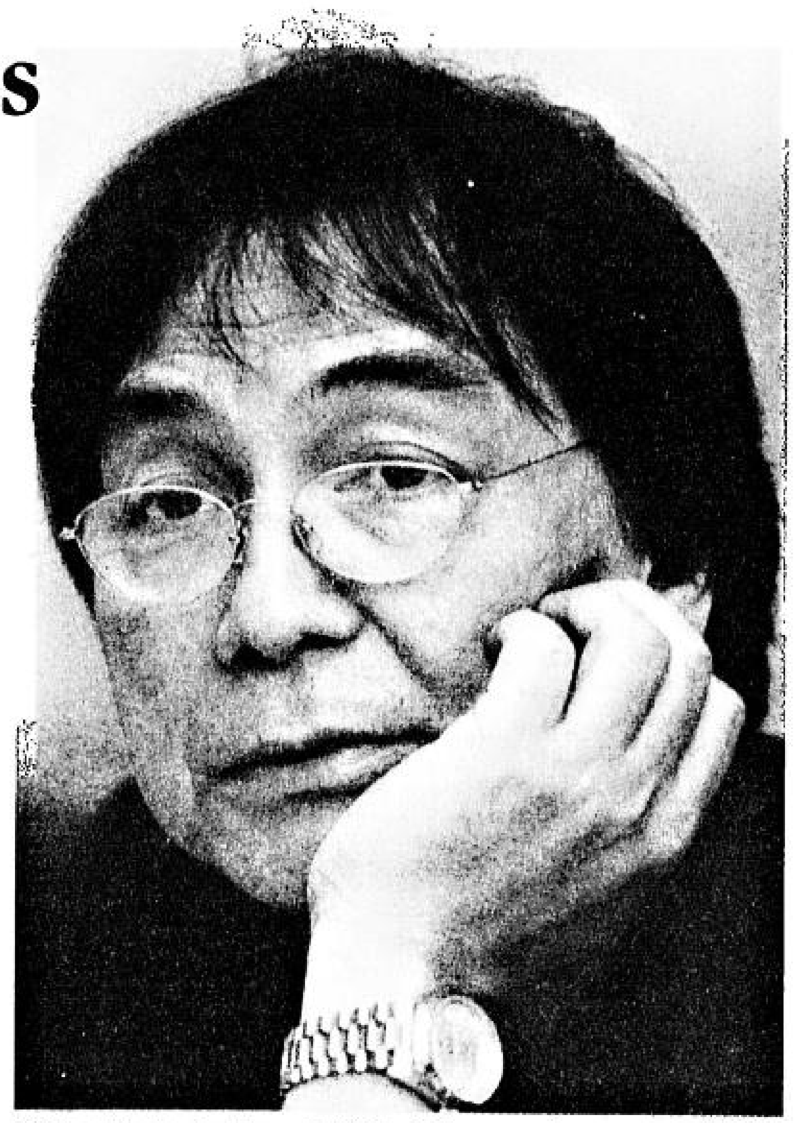
Tuviera's letter acknowledged that he and other Tape executives and lawyers have coordinated with the MTRCB regarding the De Leon case.

Tuviera said Tape agreed to comply with the agreements reached with the MTRCB during their meeting on Aug. 9, including De Leon's two-month suspension and another six-month suspension in case of another offense; asking De Leon to apologize to televiewers for having said the word; and reminding the "Eat Bulaga" directors to immediately go on a commercial break in case lewd words are said during the show.

Inquirer Entertainment caught up with De Leon at Broadway Centrum in Quezon City just after "Eat Bulaga." Valle gave the TV host her notebook and pen to write his contact number in case he didn't want to talk about the issue.

When told that the subject was his suspension, De Leon, who was already in his car, showed surprise and hastily returned the notebook and pen. The Tape guards shoved Valle as well as the other fans who had also waited at the parking lot to get autographs and have their pictures taken with the hosts and the other stars.

This is De Leon's second warning from the MTRCB. The first time, he was suspended for two weeks for violating the same rules.



DE Leon is asked not to make light of his suspension. PDI PHOTO

Less movies, more politics for Mikey

FOR MIKEY Arroyo, the movie actor and new congressman of Pampanga province, there'll be more serious political work and less show business commitments.

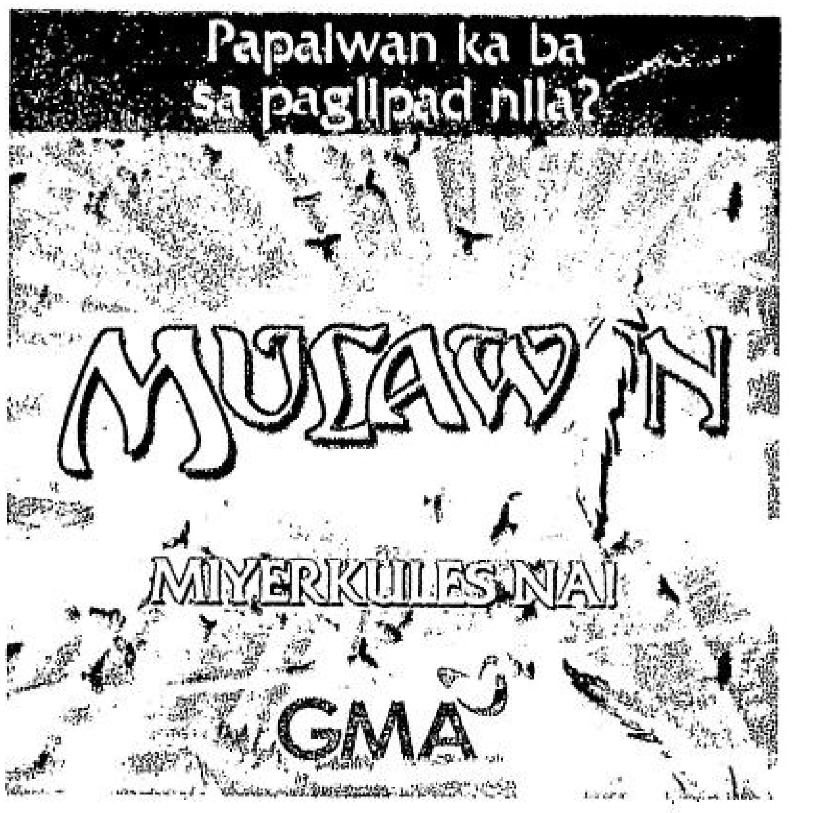
"I've always given priority to my political work," Mikey says. "I feel that being a public servant is more important, although I love show business, where I started in the first place.

"Everyone knows that show biz will always be a part of me," he adds, "but I'm now giving top priority to my job as a public servant."

In the May elections, Mikey, until then the vice governor of Pampanga, was elected the congressional representative of the 2nd district of the province. "One of the things I will do is to support the 10-point agenda of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, to

ARROYO. "I love show biz, but..."

LESS/ A28



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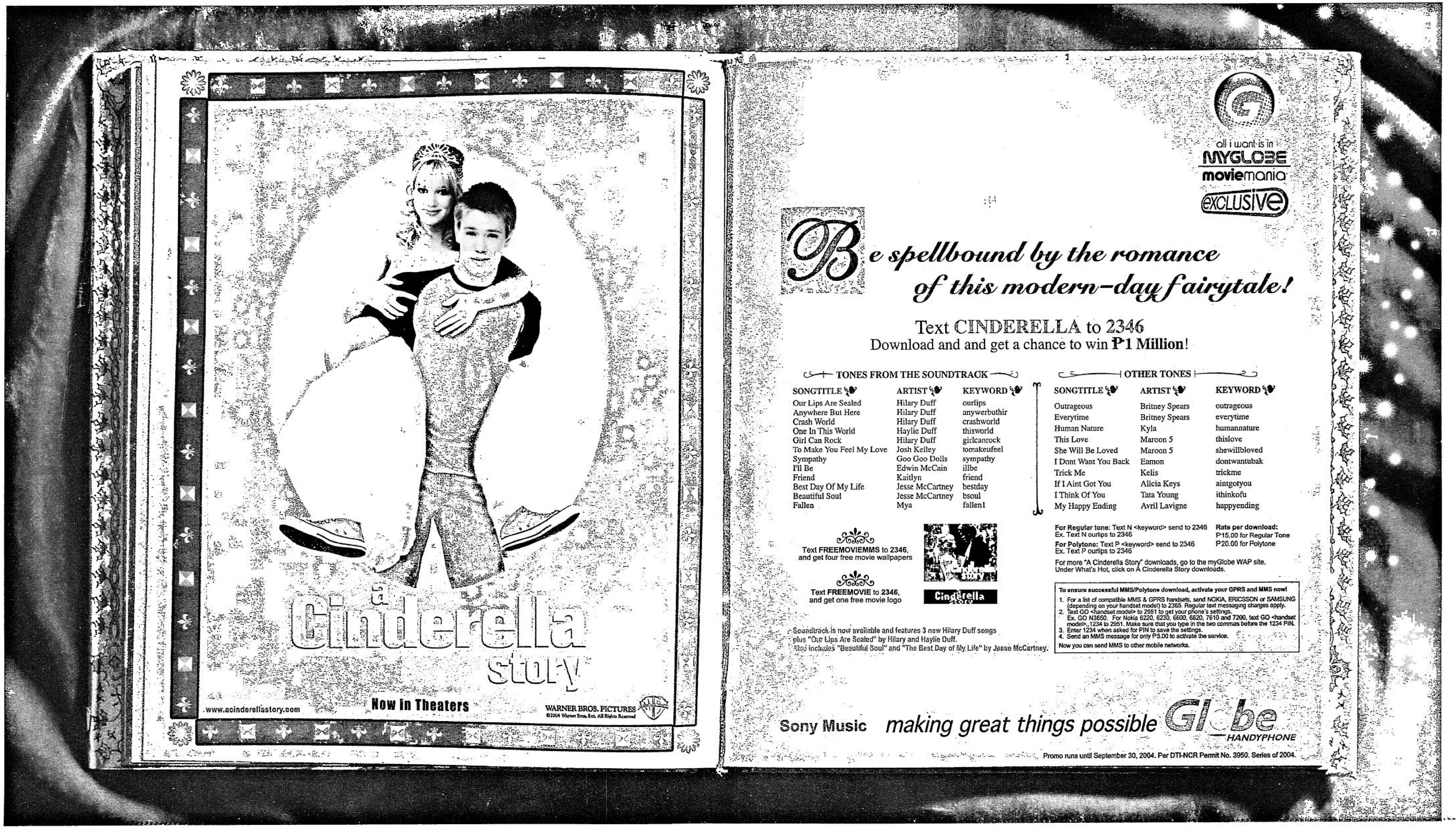
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SONGTITLE	ARTIST	KEYWORD
Our Lips Are Sealed	Hilary Duff	ourlips
Anywhere But Here	Hilary Duff	anywerbuthir
Crash World	Hilary Duff	crashworld
One In This World	Haylie Duff	thisworld
Girl Can Rock	Hilary Duff	girlcanrock
To Make You Feel My Love	Josh Kelley	tomakeufeel
Sympathy	Goo Goo Dolls	sympathy
I'll Be	Edwin McCain	illbe
Friend	Kaitlyn	friend
Best Day Of My Life	Jesse McCartney	bestday
Beautiful Soul	Jesse McCartney	bsoul
Fallen	Mya	fallen1

OTHER TONES

SONGTITLE	ARTIST	KEYWORD
Outrageous	Britney Spears	outrageous
Everytime	Britney Spears	everytime
Human Nature	Kyla	humannature
This Love	Maroon 5	thislove
She Will Be Loved	Maroon 5	shewillbloved
I Dont Want You Back	Eamon	dontwantubak
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If I Aint Got You	Alicia Keys	aintgotyou
I Think Of You	Tata Young	ithinkofu
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World oil prices touch new record

SINGAPORE—US oil prices hit a fresh record yesterday, just short of $45 a barrel, after the stoppage of Iraqi crude production compounded fears that tightly stretched global supply would be inadequate in times of any disruption.

US light crude rose to $44.99 a barrel, up 15 cents on the day and the highest since futures were launched on the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) in 1983.

London's September Brent crude lost 15 cents to $41.41 a barrel, compared with Monday's record high at $41.70 and a settlement at $41.56.

It is the eighth trading day in a row that oil has sailed to untested peaks and dealers said prices were reaching levels that were likely to attract profit-taking.

"The market is kind of exhausted at this point. I'm looking for a retracement in prices, but it depends how long the Iraqi stoppage runs. If there is a swift resolution, we could easily see a $1 correction," said Tony Nunan, manager at Mitsubishi Corp.'s international petroleum business.

Iraq shut on Monday its southern oilfields that pump crude to the key Basra oil terminal following threats of sabotage by Shi'ite Muslim militia.

The southern fields had been supplying the Gulf Basra oil terminal with about 1.9 million barrels per day (bpd). An Iraqi oil official said storage at the terminal was sufficient to keep exports running for about two days.

Iraqi officials said the fields would remain closed until the threat is diminished. The closure is the first significant shutdown of Iraq's main southern oil sector since the handover of power to Iraq's interim government on June 28.

The shutdown underlined the vulnerability of supplies at a time when global demand is accelerating at the fastest pace in 20 years and producers are pumping almost at full tilt.

"Longer term I'm still bullish. If we continue to have a tight supply/demand balance and we see US stocks draw down as we go into winter, we may see $50 oil," said Nunan.

Security concerns in the Middle East, especially Iraq and Saudi Arabia, have stoked worries over potential supply hiccups at a time when the Opec producers' cartel is pumping about 30 million barrels daily, a level not seen since 1979.

Traders are also concerned over supplies from Russia's Yukos, which is battling bankruptcy that could disrupt its oil exports. The company, which pumps 1.7 million bpd, or 2 percent of world supplies, is embroiled in a multibillion-dollar tax debt case.

There are also fears that next weekend's referendum on the rule of President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, the world's No. 5 exporter, may disrupt supplies.

A two-month strike by opponents of leftist Chavez late in 2002 temporarily halted the Opec producer's overseas sales and caused prices to spike.

The International Energy Agency, adviser to 26 industrialized nations on energy policy, has stepped up consultation with member-countries on the possible release of strategic oil stocks.

"IEA countries have the ability to respond through the coordinated release of strategic stocks. We are carefully assessing the situation," said Kenji Kobayashi, director of the office of oil markets and emergency preparedness.

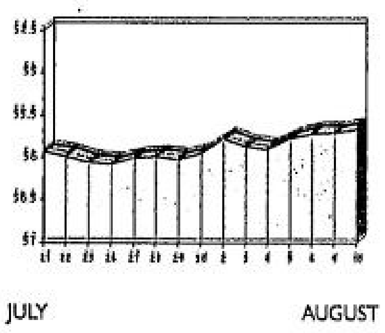
Iran, the second-biggest producer in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, said it was worried that three consecutive quarters of stockbuilding could trigger a price collapse.

"We're putting the whole structure at risk from an avalanche of stocks," said Iran's Opec governor Hossein Kazempour Ardebili. *Reuters*

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



₱ 55.66 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 10, 2004

¥ 110.63 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 10, 2004

GOLD: $398.10-398.60
per ounce Hong Kong, Aug. 10, 2004

August 10, 2004

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.814598	1.000000	55.6700
Japan	Yen	0.007365	0.009041	0.5033
United Kingdom	Pound	1.499837	1.841200	102.4996
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.104466	0.128243	7.1393
Switzerland	Franc	0.649910	0.797830	44.4152
Canada	Dollar	0.618478	0.759244	42.2671
Singapore	Dollar	0.474708	0.582751	32.4417
Australia	Dollar	0.583983	0.716897	39.9097
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.160851	2.652661	147.6736
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.217221	0.266660	14.8450
Brunei	Dollar	0.473328	0.581058	32.3475
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000089	0.000109	0.0061
Thailand	Baht	0.019677	0.024155	1.3447
UAE	Dirham	0.221786	0.272264	15.1569
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.227600	68.3405
Argentina	Peso	0.267739	0.328677	18.2974
Brazil	Real	0.268401	0.329489	18.3427
Denmark	Kroner	0.134518	0.165134	9.1930
India	Rupee	0.017590	0.021594	1.2021
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.214396	0.263193	14.6520
Mexico	New Peso	0.071440	0.087700	4.8823
New Zealand	Dollar	0.532660	0.653894	36.4023
Norway	Kroner	0.120576	0.148019	8.2402
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013865	0.017021	0.9476
South Africa	Rand	0.133848	0.164312	9.1472
Korea	Won	0.000705	0.000865	0.0482
Sweden	Kroner	0.108896	0.133681	7.4420
Syria	Pound	0.019743	0.024237	1.3493
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023959	0.029412	1.6374
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000425	0.000522	0.0291

STOCK MARKET

Shares end higher

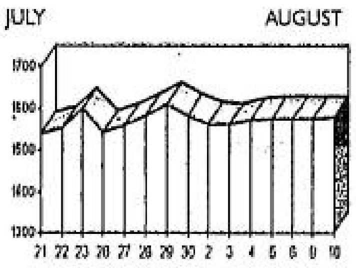
STOCKS ended a shade higher yesterday, helped by telecom issues such as second-ranked Globe Telecom Inc., but the market was weighed down by inflation concerns caused by surging oil prices.

"The market ended higher because of Globe and players' expectations of the company's prospects for the rest of the year," said AB Capital analyst Jose Vistan. "But the market was mixed as inflation concerns dampened sentiment."

The main index closed 1.05 points or 0.07 percent higher at 1,579.26 points. Value turnover jumped to P995.21 million from Monday's P564.95 million.

Losers beat gainers 38 to 35 and there were 43 stocks unchanged.

Analysts said telecom firms were expected to sustain their strong profit growth next year as more Filipinos use mobile phones due to cheaper costs and flashy handsets. *Reuters*



(See stock market report on Page B4)

BSP vows to keep key rates steady

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday vowed to hold off any monetary tightening for as long as it can despite inflationary pressures from skyrocketing oil prices.

"We're hoping we don't have to do anything this year," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura told reporters.

He reiterated the BSP's previous pronouncement that inflation rate in the country would still likely stay within the 4-5 percent target range this year.

"Next year, it is more likely that we'll overshoot the target," Buenaventura said.

The inflation target range for 2005 is likewise set at 4-5 percent.

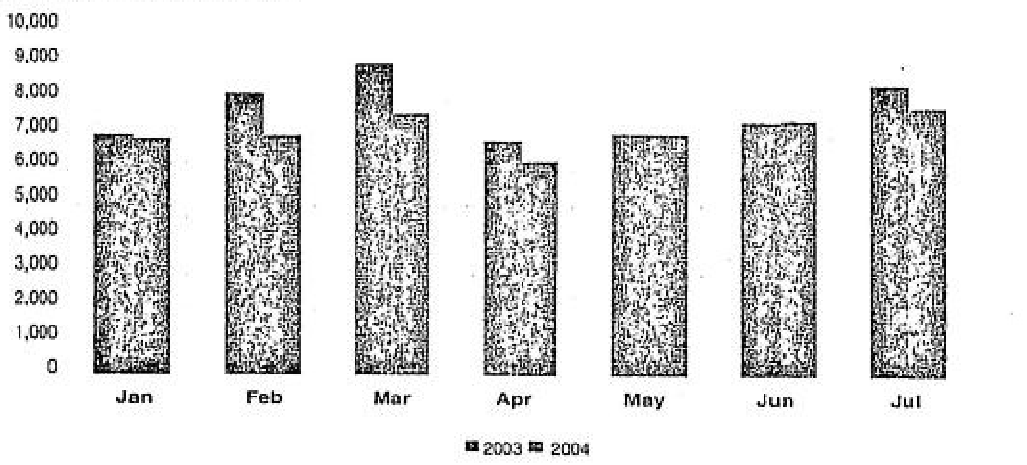
If the BSP would have to take action to arrest inflationary pressures, Buenaventura said: "We have to be measured in our response."

The BSP chief said this meant that the BSP would stave off any drastic monetary tightening as this would choke domestic business activities.

Whenever inflation is on the rise, monetary authorities siphon off excess liquidity in the system to prevent consumerist spending sprees that could further fuel the upsurge in prices.

In this case, Buenaventura said any drastic monetary tightening would only hurt the economy because the pressures were coming from the supply side, which could not be influenced by monetary policy.

TOTAL VEHICLE SALES
January to July 2003 & 2004



JANUARY-JULY

Vehicle sales down 7.4%

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE LOCAL automotive industry continued to get dragged down by the slow turnover early this year as sales in the first seven months went down 7.4 percent compared to the same period in 2003.

According to the latest report of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Campi) and the Truck Manufacturers Association (TMA), the sluggish performance during the first semester was due to political jitters.

The report said total sales in July went down 7.6 percent to 7,800 units against 8,439 in the same month last year.

However, sales grew month-on-month by 4.9 percent from 7,433 units in June.

"(This was) due to aggressive promos and marketing strategies of assemblers and continuous product development and introduction of new models," the groups said.

Campi and TMA data showed that the

VEHICLE/B4

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How a robbery opened doors to retail success

ANG TUNAY
NA ORIG
SINCE 1993

A SHOPPER checks out the store.

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

BLESSINGS sometimes come in hideous guises.

Entrepreneurs Eric and Emelda Teng know this only too well, as it was when they lost a substantial amount of money to a holdup man in 1994 that they were forced to wrack their brains for a way to quickly recover the money, part of which they owed to other people.

The result was the P99 store chain—the first and the largest one-price retail network with more than 25 branches—and Maldita, a ladies' clothes chain catering mainly to the fashion conscious set who dare to bare.

Eric in an interview said that retail chains were not on their minds when they started out.

He was content handling his own plywood distribution business, while his wife was happy with just one P99 store at the Tutuban Center in Divisoria, which was put up in August 1993.

What they earned was enough to support their frugal lifestyle.

Crossroads

They were rudely jolted out of their complacency when Emelda's bag, containing cash and checks, was stolen.

"That incident was our crossroads," Eric said. "We understood that it was a trial that we had to overcome. We were pushed into a corner, so we had to be aggressive."

Eric gave up the plywood business and combined forces with Emelda to scrounge for ways to earn money.

THE P99 store, where the store name is the brand and the brand is the price.

They were no strangers to hard work as they handled their individual businesses on their own. In his plywood business, Eric was the agent, forklift operator, truck driver and sales person in one.

Emelda was the same one-woman show for her P99 store. She was the owner, cashier, display designer, personnel manager, contract negotiator and inventory checker.

The two went into real estate for a few years and they channeled a part of what they earned to put up the second P99 store at Robinsons Imus in December 1998.

SUCCESS STORY

"It was quite risky, but we did it," Eric said. "I look at it as one of those life-changing events. Fortunately, the store clicked."

Brand is the price

The P99 store developed a loyal and growing following because of its wide array of products. And as the name suggests, all products are sold at P99 each. It is the only store where the store name is the brand, and the brand is the price.

The Tengs were inspired to put up a one-price chain when they saw the $1 stores in the United States. They thought that selling quality products at affordable prices under one roof was bound to be a winning combination in the Philippines.

There was no looking back for the Tengs who faced down seemingly insurmountable odds.

They drew on their merchandising expertise to stock the P99 store with products such as men's and ladies' wear, children's apparel, accessories, footwear, household items, toys and novelty items.

"We are very hands-on managers," Eric said.

The Imus store was quickly followed by the Ever Commonwealth branch in March 1999, and by a new store concept, Maldita, which made its debut in Robinsons Galleria.

"Maldita was actually a house brand of P99 store that we spun off into a separate store," Eric said. "It was already selling clothes with spaghetti straps and plunging necklines before it became popular."

'Naughty'

The Tengs moved from strength to strength, and the P99 store eventually grew to a network of 25 branches, while the Maldita stores expanded to 16 branches.

Maldita—"naughty" in English—held its own in the competitive fashion market by providing a wide range of trendy apparel and accessories that are ideal for boardrooms and bars.

It has also added a complete line of shoes, bags and costume jewelry to add a fun twist to everyday wardrobe.

The P99 store has branches at Robinsons, Ayala Glorietta, Metropolis Alabang, Starmall, Grand Pavilion Biñan, Robinsons Cebu and Plaza Maestro, Vigan City and along Bonifacio Street in Tuguegarao City.

It has also opened their doors to franchise applications. Of the 25 P99 stores, three are held by franchisees.

The franchise costs about P1.1 million, which includes the franchise fee, construction cost, sound system, counterfeit money detector, first month inventory, display racks and hangers. The minimum area required is 40 square meters and the franchise agreement is good for five years.

Exhilirating ride

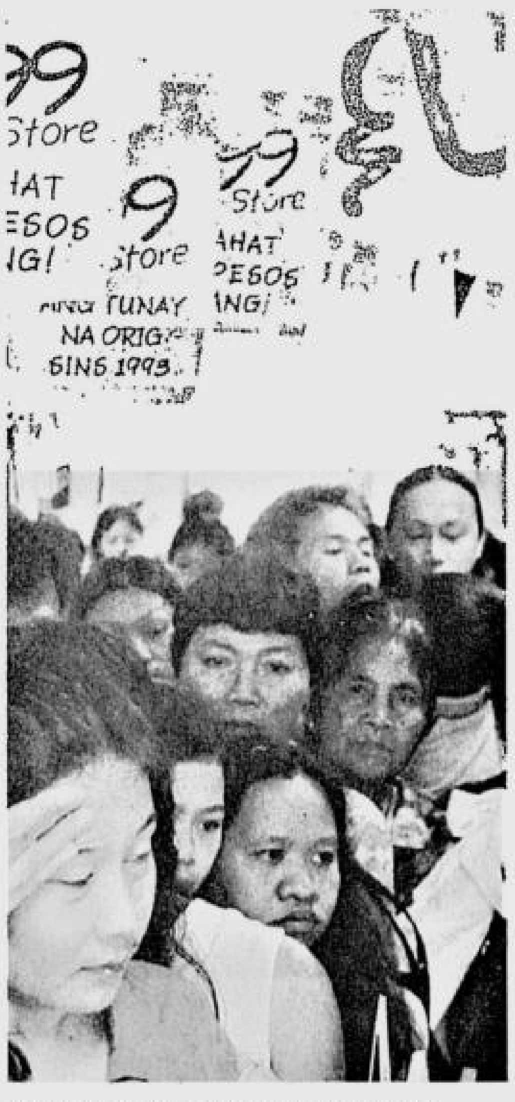
Maldita, on the other hand, has branches in leading malls and will open soon at Market!Market! at the Global City, Fort Bonifacio.

It has been an exhilarating ride for the Tengs.

From desperately trying to gather enough funds to meet debt payments, the couple is now preparing for Maldita's foray into foreign shores and further expansion of the P99 store network through the franchising route.

They are now spreading the word that, from seeming failures come success, and thus, should be welcomed.

"When you fail, you never know if that will be the one event that will turn your life around," Eric said.



A SWARM of customers, goods in hand, make a beeline for the counter inside the retail store.

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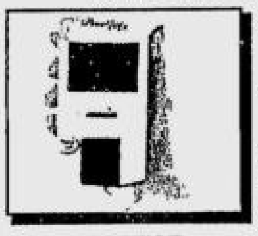

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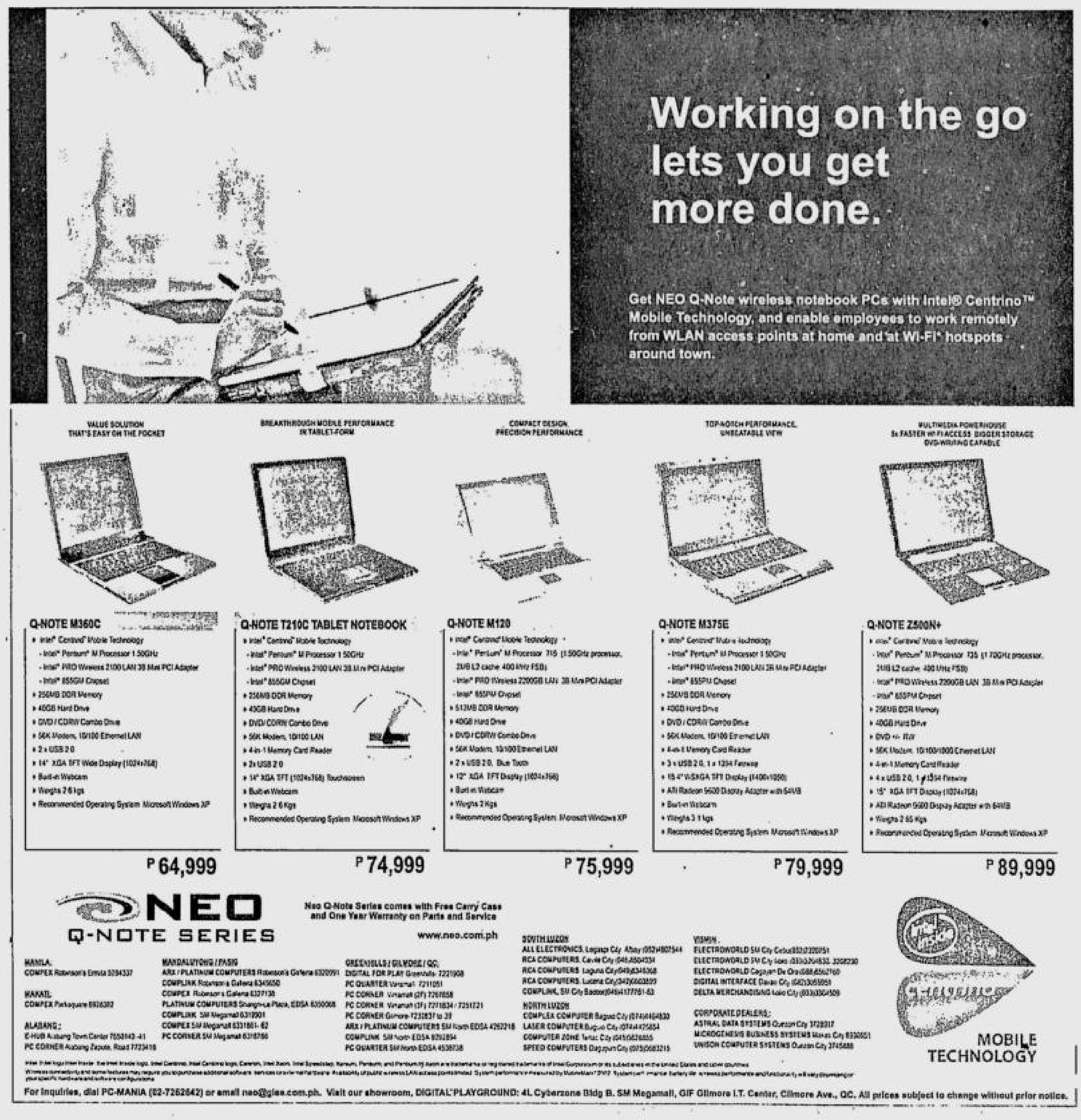

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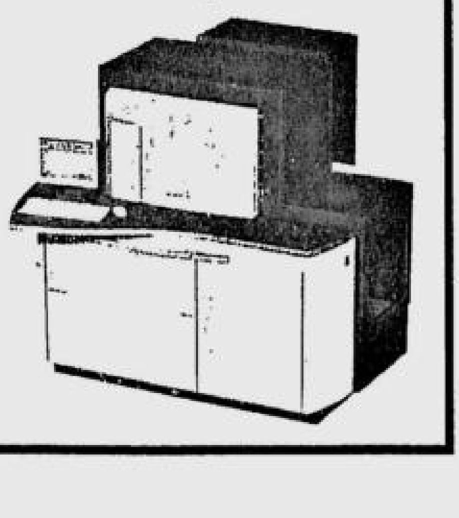


Competitive spirits

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

ASIAN Spirit is negotiating for the acquisition of a 90-seat jet that it plans to field for the Manila-Tagbilaran route, in time for the Halloween and Christmas rush.

That corridor used to be served by an Asian Spirit turbo prop until Philippine Airlines decided to return to what had traditionally been classified as a "missionary" route, and fielded a faster jet plane that knocked the wind out of the fledgling airline.

Not only that, Cebu Pacific also added the route to its fare-busting network, prompting Asian Spirit to momentarily stop its Tagbilaran flights altogether until it shall have acquired a more competitive plane.

Controlled by investment banker Noel Onate, the Turralbas of the Active Group and the Po family with 32 percent each, the cooperative airline also plans to use that first jet for the Manila-Catarman route.

Onate confirmed the impending jet acquisition but declined to add details, given the announcement from Air Philippines, a Lucio Tan airline like PAL, that it was acquiring a fleet of 40-seat planes to serve PAL's abandoned missionary routes like Batanes, Romblon and Catanduanes, incidentally the same destinations currently being served by Asian Spirit.

According to the grapevine, Asian Spirit also plans to make Cebu a secondary hub and, like taipan John Gokongwei's Cebu Pacific, connect underserved Visayan cities with the Queen City of the South.

Likewise, given the improving peace and order situation in Mindanao, Asian Spirit plans to revive its Zamboanga hub and resume flights to connect the city with the islands of Tawi-Tawi and Sulu.

According to Onate, Asian Spirit posted a respectable 2003 net income of P150 million by merely concentrating and oftentimes being the lone airline flying what had been money-losing provincial routes that PAL had abandoned.

During the high season, Asian Spirit flies as many as 15 flights a day to Caticlan, the gateway to the now world-famous Boracay.

Hi, Societies

THE LOPEZES have decided to compete head-on with Philippine Tatler and break the expat-owned magazine's hold on the high-society market.

According to the grapevine, the Lopezes' Benpres Publications is launching next month a new glossy called Metro Society, chronicling the lifestyles of the rich and famous, and spiced with a naughty article, photo spread or a column here and there to draw celebrity

COCKTALES/B5

BPI revives interest in Indon bank

By Doris C. Dumlao

AYALA-OWNED Bank of the Philippine Islands, the country's second biggest lender, has revived its interest to invest in Indonesia as part of its renewed expansion binge.

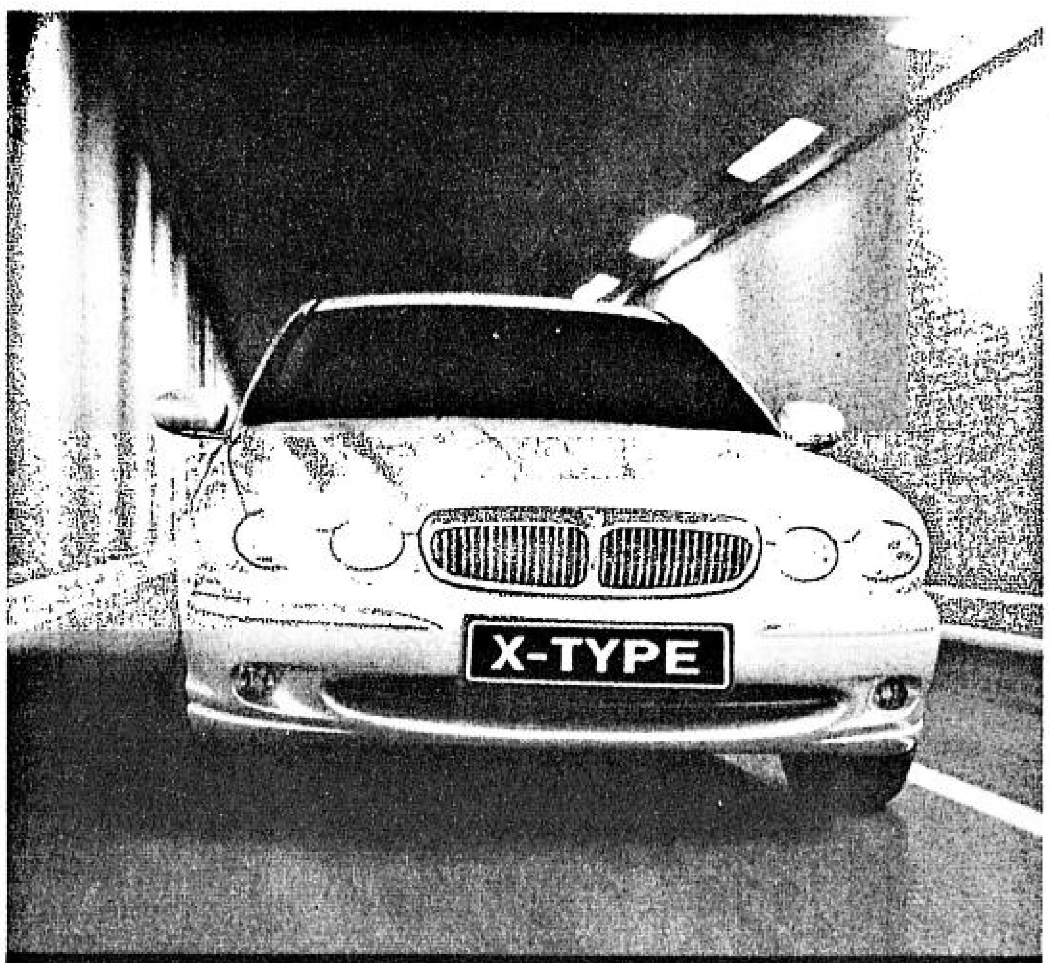
BPI senior vice president Jurisita Quintos yesterday told the Philippine Stock Exchange the bank was considering to bid for PT Bank Permata Tbk., which was about to be privatized by the Indonesian government.

"BPI has been considering a possible investment outside the country and Indonesia has been identified as one of those areas where opportunities for the bank may be present," Quinto said.

However, she said the bank has yet to take any significant step toward such an investment.

It was earlier reported in Indonesia that the state-agency PT Persuahaan Penggola Aset planned to sell its 51-

BPI/B5



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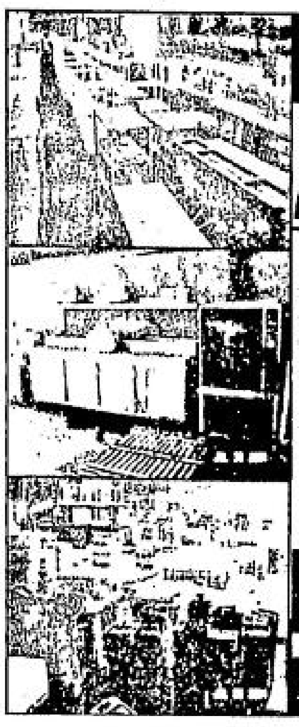

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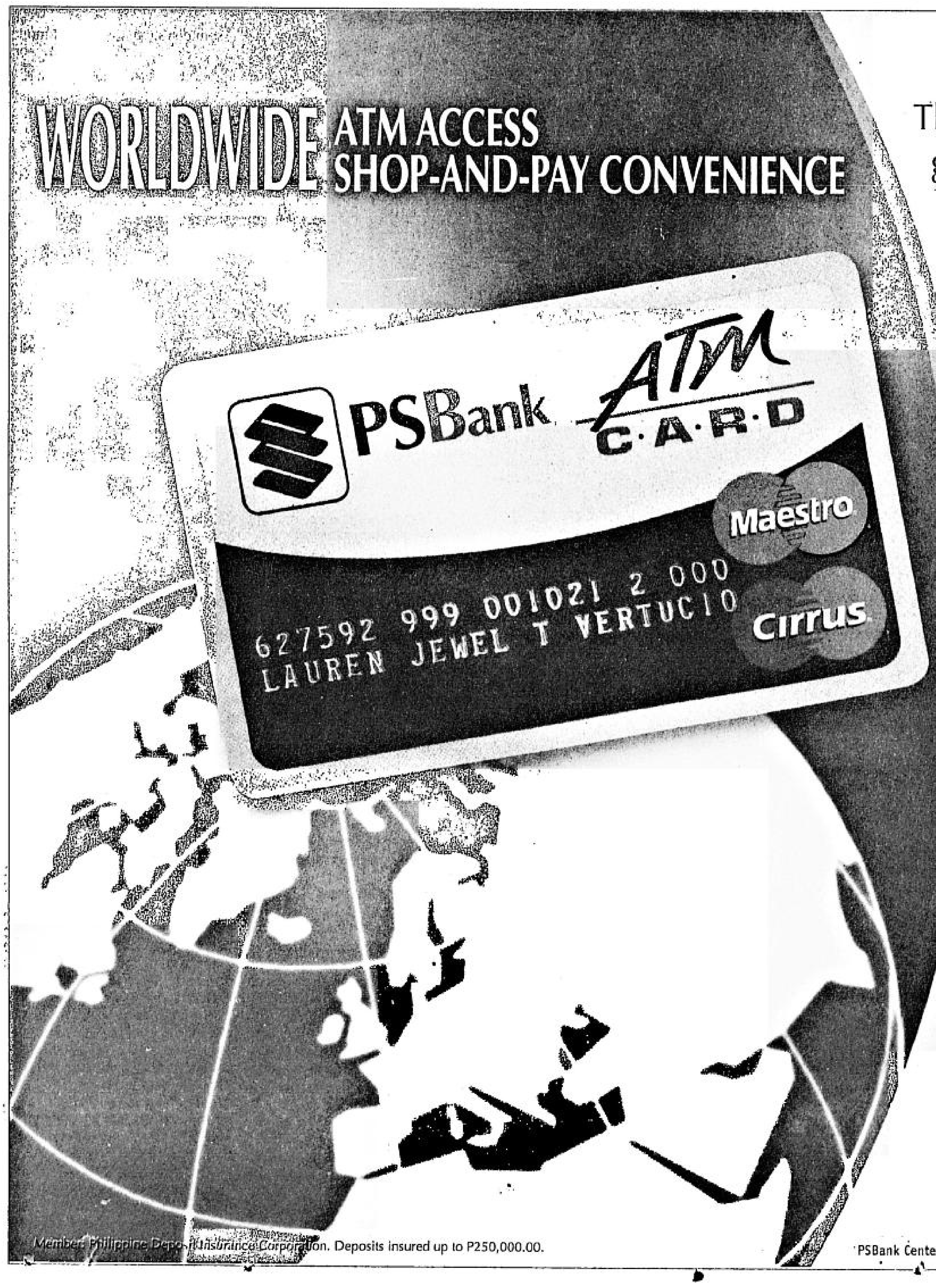

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ELECTION SPENDING

ABS-CBN profit up 10% to P560M

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. reported a 10-percent increase in its net profit for the first half to P560 million, as election advertising spending boosted revenue at the country's largest media network.

Airtime and other broadcast-related revenues increased 5 percent to P5.56 billion in the first half, most of which were contributed by free-to-air local Channel 2.

On the other hand, revenue from its other channels, such as Studio 23 and the ABS-CBN News Channel, fell by 7 percent in the first six months, as advertisers pulled back their placements during the election period.

Over 90 percent of political ads or roughly P480 million was placed in Channel 2, which commands a bigger audience share, compared to other television platforms.

ABS-CBN, which runs radio and television stations, owns movie and music studios and publishes magazines, remains confident about meeting its 10 percent income growth target this year, but admits that it would be a tough climb.

ABS-CBN chief financial officer Randolph Estrellado said the company will run promotions to boost revenue and profit in the second half and offset cutbacks in advertising spending and the overall wait and see attitude of businesses.

"The (second quarter) is not as strong as we'd like .. We would be implementing promos to encourage advertisers . There is still a shot at hitting 10 percent in airtime revenue growth but high single digit (growth) is more likely (for the full year)," Estrellado said.

SEC tightens audit rules

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission continues to tighten its rules on audit and accounting procedures to protect the investing public from corporate fraud.

The SEC said in a proposed memorandum that the external auditor should inform the audit committee of the company's board of director's of all critical accounting policies and practices that could affect the presentation of the company's financial condition.

Before filing annual reports, audit committees would be required to review the selection, application and disclosure of critical accounting policies, the SEC said.

The corporate watchdog likewise proposed that the external auditor explain why a certain method or accounting treatment was chosen.

If the accounting treatment does not comply with existing accounting policies, the selection of the alternative policy should be discussed.

The proposed memorandum covering audit committees is the latest in the series of steps that the SEC has taken to ensure that the public gets the correct company information.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Retail confab set

WHAT and why do people buy? Where do people shop? These questions and more will be answered by Peter Gale of AC Nielsen Asia Pacific, in a presentation on "Shopper Trends: Understanding Consumer Habits" during the 13th National Retailers Conference and Stores Asia Expo 2004 (NRCE) on Aug. 11-13 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel.

AC Nielsen's presentation will focus on new store formats.

It will also feature a trade sector overview, shopping behavior, store relationships and the relationship between retailers and their shoppers.

The event is sponsored by the Philippine Retailers Association and supported by IBM, Microsoft, Oracle, PLDT Business Solutions, Epson, GlobeQUEST, Araneta Center, Ayala Center, Robinsons Malls, SM Shoemart, Montanara, Oxygen, San Miguel Corp., Bench, Shangri-La Plaza, Wyeth, Microwarehouse, GMA-7, The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Mastercard and Mellow Touch 94.7.

For details, contact the PRA at 687-4180/4181; 687-4985. Email: pra@nwave.net.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 10, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	5,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	40.5	41	40.5	40.5	195,400
China Banking Corp.	535	535	535	535	100
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	1,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26	25	26	61,300
Philippine National Bank	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	1,300
Security Bank Corp.	21	21.75	21	21.5	52,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2200	2200	2200	2200	60
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	110	110	110	110	2,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1500	1500	1500	1500	480
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	2,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.66	0.67	0.66	0.66	910,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	885	905	885	905	356,580
Ipeople Inc.	1.5	1.54	1.5	1.5	102,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.046	0.046	0.045	0.045	2,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	3,600,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	100,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.38	2.46	2.36	2.46	15,486,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1275	1285	1275	1280	150,760
Ivantage Corp.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	370,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.75	15.5	14.5	15	209,500
Manila Electric Co. B	22	22.75	21.75	22	2,650,400
Petron Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.65	2,368,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.06	270,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	601,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.2	3.5	3.2	3.5	1,410,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	10,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.35	0.41	0.35	0.41	110,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.4	0.4	230,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	14,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.7	1.7	370,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	100
Jollibee Foods Corp.	26	26	26	26	389,600
Swift Food Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	200,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57	57.5	57	57	39,300
San Miguel Corp. B	69	69	69	69	5,000
Universal Robina Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	100,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.005	0.0055	0.005	0.0055	12,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	11,000,000
Ayala Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	43,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.05	3.1	3.05	3.1	26,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.022	3,000,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.006	38,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	100,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	20,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1	1	1	1	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	25	25	24.75	24.75	11,600
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.14	500,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.49	0.5	0.49	0.5	12,750,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	140,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.19	0.215	0.19	0.215	11,620,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	1.42	1.56	1.4	1.54	24,468,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.032	0.034	0.032	0.033	10,500,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	20,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	2.9	3.15	2.9	3.15	16,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23.25	23.5	23	23.25	750,600
Global Equities Inc.	0.07	0.0725	0.07	0.07	19,700,000
Ionics, Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	85,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.5	1.5	207,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.015	6,500,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.016	0.016	0.014	0.014	17,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.14	928,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.185.	0.185	0.18	0.18	250,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	6,740,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	460,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	300,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	250,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	50,000
South China Resources Inc	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	30,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	9,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.14	0.145	1,960,000
Wellex Industries, Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	10,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.95	1	0.95	1	3,010,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.0625	0.0625	3,900,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Bella Corp.	0.56	0.57	0.56	0.56	1,320,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	100,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.4	0.43	0.33	0.33	10,250,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	163,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	20.75	20.75	20.75	20.75	9,000
Macroasia Corp. Warrants	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	2,178,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.45	0.45	250,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.225	0.24	0.225	0.24	580,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	460,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.96	0.99	0.96	0.97	7,040,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	1,000,000
Gotesco Land Inc.B	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	400,000
Fil-Estate Land, Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	330,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
SM Development Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	254,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.8	35,760,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	55,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3.6	3.7	3.4	3.45	141,000
Benguet Corp. A	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	10,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.25	0.25	0.235	0.24	7,690,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	4,610,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.018	0.019	0.017	0.019	911,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.02	0.021	0.019	0.021	561,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	201,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	2,100,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.42	0.42	0.38	0.39	2,530,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.47	0.47	0.45	0.45	720,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.155	2,600,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	5,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0038	0.0038	0.0036	0.0038	92,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	300,000
Pacifica	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.008	12,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.215	0.24	0.21	0.215	5,720,000

DISCLOSURES

PREMIERE Entertainment Productions Inc. denied having any information to explain the unusual movement in the price of its shares.

* * *

ALFREDO de Borja was elected member of **Ionics Inc.**'s audit committee.

* * *

CITYLAND Development Corp. launched its commercial and residential condominium project in Pasig City called Oxford Mansion.

* * *

TRADING of **Leisure and Resorts World Corp.** shares were suspended yesterday in connection with the company's approved reduction in its number of outstanding capital stock.

* * *

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. clarified that the concept of having two sets of board of directors to address family interests and corporate functions separately is still being studied.

* * *

PHILCOMSAT Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 31, 9 a.m. at the Manila Golf and Country Club, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of Aug. 6 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

Vehicle sales down . . .

From page B1

number of vehicles sold from January to July was slightly less than half of the forecast sales of 100,000 units this year.

Passenger car sales continued to fuel the overall industry performance with a 58-percent increase in the first seven months to 18,734 units. This represented 38 percent of all vehicles sold during the period.

The commercial vehicle segment—light trucks, trucks and buses, Asian utility vehicles (AUVs) and light commercial vehicles (LCVs)—continued its slump with a 24.5-percent decline to a total of 31,075 units sold in the January-July period.

Sales of AUVs slid by 51 percent and of light trucks also by 50 percent. Sales of LCVs went up by 24 percent and of trucks and buses by 14 percent.

In terms of total sales, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. led the pack with 35 percent of the market. It sold 17,469 units in the first seven months, up by 11 percent from a year ago.

Mitsubishi Motors Philippine Corp. came in second with 14 percent of the market, selling 6,976 units. This, however, was a 22-percent decline from the sales during the same period in 2003.

Honda Cars Philippines Inc. placed third with 13.4 percent of the market. It sold 6,674 units from January to July, a decline of 29.9 percent from the year-ago level.

In the passenger car segment, Toyota grabbed 48 percent of the market; Honda had 24.4 percent, and General Motors Automobiles Philippines had 6.5 percent.

Also, Toyota sold the most commercial vehicles, grabbing 27 percent of the market segment. Mitsubishi cornered 18.9 percent and Isuzu Philippines Corp. 16.9 percent.

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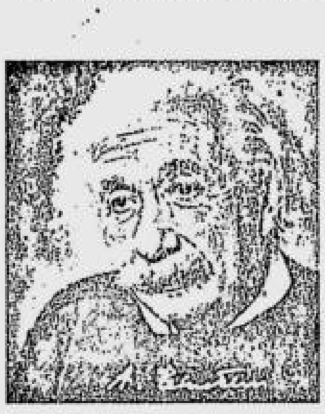

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5-yr T-bill rate dips to 11.8%

By Michelle V. Remo

A LACKLUSTER US economy drove down the rate of five-year Philippine debt papers to 11.875 percent yesterday, as banks showed strong appetite for local long-term government securities.

"Momentum of a possible increase in (United States) interest rates is not as fast as initially perceived, and data coming out do not show a strong US economy," said National Treasurer Mina Figueroa, explaining the decline in the rate of the five-year treasury bonds.

The 11.875-percent rate for the five-year debt paper was 12.5 basis points lower than the 12 percent recorded during its previous auction on June 15.

Figueroa, who heads the Treasury's auction committee, said the improved rate showed market preference for local government securities and enough liquidity among banks.

Last Friday, the United States Labor Department announced a much lower-than-expected number of job creation in July, sending jitters to its financial and stock markets. The department said new jobs created in the United States in July stood at 32,000, or only about one-seventh of the expected 228,000.

Awash with cash and gaining more confidence on the local investment environment, banks scrambled for the five-year T-bond. Tenders for the long-term government security reached P9.359 billion, or more than double the government's offering of only P4.5 billion.

The auction committee accepted P4.5 billion worth of bids, raising the entire amount of its scheduled borrowing.

Meanwhile, Figueroa said the national government might again tap the international market for a bond offering to complete the financing requirement of state-owned National Power Corp. An international bond issue is also being considered to prefund the government's budget requirements for next year, she said.

PUV group, oil firm to put up 200 stations

By Clarissa S. Batino

A MAJOR transport group has tied up with small player Fil Oil controlled by the Villavicencio family to initially put up more than 200 small fuel stations in the outskirts of Metro Manila and nearby provinces starting this year.

The Philippine Confederation of Drivers Organizations-Alliance of Concerned Transport Operators said it would open four stations within the month. The Villavicencio family also owns the Flying V gasoline stations.

The tie-up with Fil Oil, said PCDO-Acto, would allow transport groups to cope with the spiraling cost of fuel.

All stations to be jointly operated by PCDO-Acto and Fil Oil would provide a 60-centavo per liter discount on gasoline and diesel to all public utility vehicles, according to PCDO-Acto president Efren de Luna.

"If we put up stations and initiate livelihood projects, then we could prevent transport groups from going on strike and asking for a fare hike despite the continued increase in fuel prices," said De Luna.

Pump prices are likely to go up by another P2 per liter from September to December, according to the Consumer Price Watch.

Other transport groups complained that diesel prices had gone up by P2 a liter since June when the government allowed jeeps and buses to increase minimum fare by P1.50 and P2.

One transport group, Fejodap, is urging the big oil players to revive the P1 per liter discount to PUVs, while another group, Piston, is lobbying to scrap the deregulation law and to bring back control of Petron Corp. to the government.

"The 60-centavo per liter discount would be available to all PUVs and not limited to our members," said De Luna.

According to the agreement, Fil Oil would provide the "portable gas stations" and the transport group would take care of the location, De Luna said. PCDO-Acto has terminals all over the country that could house a small station with two hoses, one for gasoline and one for diesel. Fil Oil, De Luna added, was prepared to spend about P1.5 million to put up the stations.

BPI revives interest in Indon bank

From page B3

percent stake in PT Bank Permata for at least 1.8 times the book value last year or about $174 million.

PT Bank Permata, formerly known as PT Bank Bali Terbuka, operates a network of 243 domestic branches and at least two overseas branches located in the United States and Cayman Island.

Banking sources said BPI did not want to be left out in the potential wave of mergers and acquisitions in the local banking system. One banking source said BPI would not wait until it had been dislodged from its ranking by another bank like Henry Sy's Banco de Oro Universal Bank before taking steps to grow further.

Cocktales

From page B3

buzz. In other words, just like Tatler.

But Benpres Publications general manager Thelma Sioson-San Juan was emphatic in clarifying that their new baby, also a monthly, is not designed to compete with Tatler since Metro Society would aim for the "young socialite set" and would concentrate on fashion and style.

"It is no Tatler at all," said San Juan, trying to be even-handed in tone and in choice of words. "It (Metro Society) fills the market need for substantive content that tells you the young socialites' generation that has taken over or is taking over" from the high-society beacons as Imelda Cojuangco and Chito Madrigal-Collantes.

"Emphasize substantive content, please," San Juan added.

Society will have INQUIRER etiquette columnist Lia Bernardo as chief editor, as well as Mia Borromeo (entertainment editor), Raul Manzano (society editor), Bea Zobel Jr. (culture editor), and Philip Cu-Unjieng (editor-at-large).

Tatler, in the meantime, is launching in January another glossy called "Society." Not to be confused with Metro Society, Society is an annual publication and a regional magazine, which means it would also contain articles about famous foreign faces and names just like Tatler.

In a Melo tone

MELO'S proprietor Carmelo Santiago wrote to say that "I, too, am a victim" in the unfortunate P4-million estafa case now hounding his son-in-law, FPJ campaigner Richard Rivera.

The steakhouse owner said the bad check that his son-in-law had allegedly given as payment to a money changer had been "stolen from me," along with three other blank checks from Santiago's check book.

Santiago said he immediately reported the loss to Security Bank, enclosing a certification from the bank's Paseo de Roxas branch.

"I would like to categorically state that the transactions entered into by Richard (Rivera) were all done without my knowledge, advice and consent," he said.

Meanwhile, ex-RPN 9 reporter Richard Elmer Rivera, who is now into public relations, wants to clarify that he is not the same or even related to Santiago's son-in-law.

Richard Elmer was somehow confused with the other Rivera since the former had also been involved in the last campaign, helping FPJ senatorial candidate Amina Rasul.

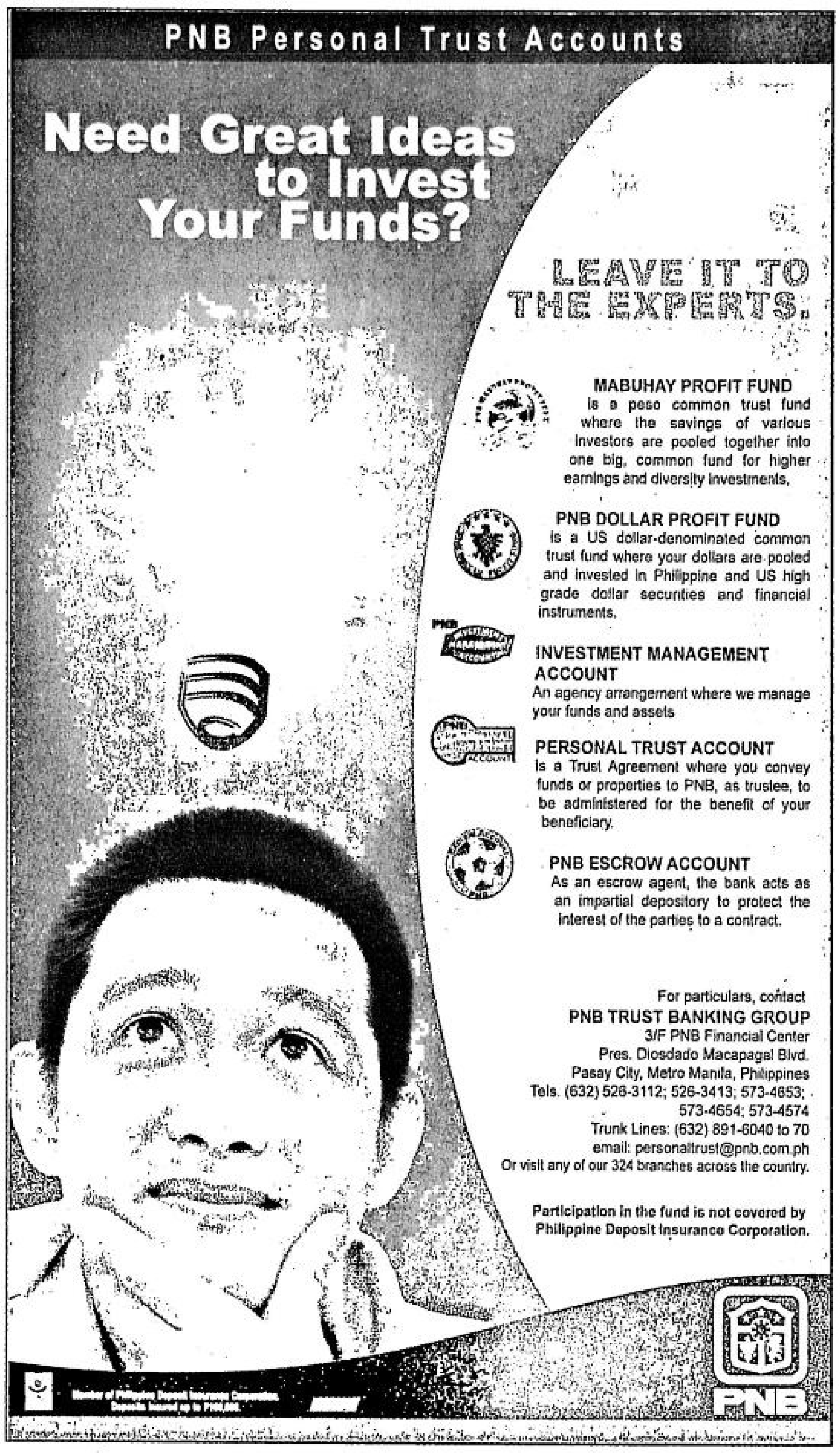
Heard through the grapevine

HOORAY for the Belmontes and fairness.

The newspaper owners have succeeded in convincing their publisher-columnist Maximo "Max" V. Soliven, clipping his hold on the Opinion section and surrogate columns with the publication, almost word for word, of a rebuttal letter from former Finance Secretary Ramon del Rosario Jr.

In the past, letters to the editor critical of Soliven had always ended up in the wastebasket.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)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4	PRINCE & ME

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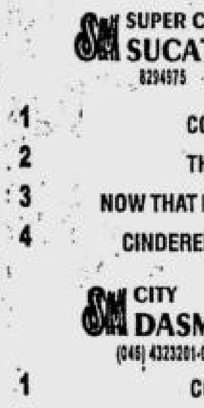

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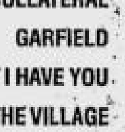

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3 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
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4	COLLATERAL

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1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
3 (DOLBY)	CATWOMAN

Lianas Cinema
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4 (DTS)	MAKAMUNDO

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3 (DTS)	GARFIELD
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Fastest reader honored

A RENOWNED theater director, a Filipino teacher with a planet named in her honor, an eminent mathematics scholar and the world's fastest reader are among the teachers who will troop to the PICC plenary hall on Aug. 28 for a rare gathering of the country's top educators. Dr. Onofre "Pagsi" Pagsanghan, Ateneo de Manila University's resident theater director and beloved teacher at its high school department; Dr. Josette Biyo, recent topnotcher in the international "Intel Excellence in Teaching Competition"; Dr. Milagros Ibe, renowned pillar of the country's academic community; and Dr. Teresa Calderon, acknowledged as the "world's fastest reader," will take part in "A Tribute to Teachers." Around 5,000 teachers, school administrators and friends are expected to take part in this national convention, the first privately initiated, large-scale gathering of the academe. On its third year, "A Tribute to Teachers" is quickly becoming a much-anticipated annual event. The event will also address key issues that affect today's teachers and students. Registration starts at 6:30 a.m. and program proper starts at 8 a.m. Participants who preregister and confirm attendance before August 15 will get the complete seminar pack, a certificate of participation plus a chance to win in the raffle. Participants may register through any of the following: Diwa website at www.diwa.ph, fax 817-8700, phone 893-8501, e-mail tribute@diwamail.com.ph or through Diwa's Learning Systems Specialists assigned in their respective schools.

Shopper trends at NRCE

WHAT and why do people buy? Where do people shop? These questions and more will be answered by Peter Gale, director for retail services, AC Nielsen Asia Pacific, in a presentation on "Shopper Trends: Understanding Consumer Habits" during the 13th National Retailers Conference and Stores Asia Expo 2004 (NRCE) from Aug. 11 to 13 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. New store formats are being introduced throughout the region and are changing the way consumers shop. AC Nielsen's presentation will also feature a trade sector overview, shopping behavior, store relationships and associations and store equity index, which measure the strength of the relationship between retailers and their shoppers. The event is sponsored by the Philippine Retailers Association (PRA at 687-4180/687-4181 e-mail pra@nwave.net) and supported by IBM, Microsoft, Oracle, PLDT Business Solutions, Epson, GlobeQUEST, Araneta Center, Ayala Center, Robinsons Malls, SM Shoemart, Montanara, Oxygen, San Miguel Corp., Bench, Shangri-La Plaza, Wyeth, Microwarehouse, GMA-7, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Mastercard and Mellow Touch 94.7. For details, call PRA at 687-4180/4181; 687-4985, or e-mail pra@nwave.net.

Pilar talks in Sotheby's art lecture

THERE are countless ways of understanding and appreciating art and Sotheby's Philippine representative Kim Acuna Camacho has organized a series of informative lectures for August to provide the public and the clients of Sotheby's with more information on paintings in the Southeast Asian art market and how to participate in the auction.

The talks to be given by UP Arts History Professor Santiago "Jak" Pilar are suited to art collectors, connoisseurs, scholars and enthusiasts. Pilar will provide fascinating insights into the life and achievements of Juan Luna, as well as discuss two major art works by the artist included in the Southeast Asian paintings auction in Singapore on Oct. 10. On Aug. 12, Pilar will bring his listeners beyond the canvass with the lecture "Philippine Art: An Overview". He will discuss the important paintings to be featured at the Southeast Asian paintings auction in Singapore on Oct.10 from a historical perspective and bring life to the works of a diverse range of Filipino masters from the late 19th century onwards.

For all lectures, Camacho will talk on how one can buy at auctions and inform what one must do before bidding, how to bid, and what happens after one wins a bid. She will explain why a condition report is important and discuss the role of the Sotheby's art specialist.

Pilar is Professor I at the College of Fine Arts, University of the Philippines where he teaches advanced courses in art history and connoisseurship in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. He is the author of many books, which include "Juan Luna: the Filipino as Painter"; "Pamana: The Jorge B. Vargas Art Collection"; and "Domingo Celis: Inspired Calm". Pilar is consultant of exhibition projects at the Ayala Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Manila and the Cultural Center of the Philippines. He was honored with the TOYM award in 1980 and the Araw ng Maynila Award: Tagapag-alaga ng Sining in 1996.

All lectures start at 6 p.m. Call Camille Abello at 884-8241 to 43 for details and reservations as seats are limited.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	12:30pm 2:30 pm 4:30pm 6:30 pm 8:30 pm
4	COLLATERAL	12:40 pm 3:25 pm 6:10 pm 8:55 pm
5	THE VILLAGE	12:40 pm 3:25 pm 6:10 pm 8:55 pm
6	KA-RELASYON	12:05 pm 2:15 pm 4:25 pm 6:35 pm 8:45 pm
7	CINDERELLA STORY	12:25 pm 2:35 pm 4:45 pm 6:55 pm 9:05 pm

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Aug 13	NIGHT OF THE CHAMPIONS: THE REPEAT
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ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
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CORONET B	A MAN APART
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REMAR	X-MEN 2
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CINEMA-3	SPIDERMAN 2
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	I ROBOT
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	PRINCE & ME
CINEMA-6	KILL BILL VOL. 2
CINEMA-7	WEREWOLF
CINEMA-8	LIBERATED 2
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	I ROBOT
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	I ROBOT
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	SPIDERMAN 2
CINEMA-12	KING ARTHUR
CINEMA-14	ALONG CAME POLLY
CINEMA-15	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PINAS)	SPIDERMAN 2
CINEMA-1	LADY KILLERS
CINEMA-2	I ROBOT
CINEMA-4	RESERVED
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3	GARFIELD	10:50, 12:55, 3:10 15:15, 7:25, 10:00	GP
4	COLLATERAL	11:10, 1:55, 4:45 7:25, 10:20	R-13

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8	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

DFNN (Diversified Financial Network Inc.) StockCert 0000170, 0000171, 0000172 (259.259 shares each) issued to EVOSERVE, INC. If no contest received new cert. will be issued. (PDI-Aug. 11, 18 & 25, 2004)

PERSONAL

Thank You Holy Spirit Fr: Gemma P. Santos & Family

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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Need Xtra Income P/F Time 7126374

RTW Consign 09167940002

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JR / SR Positions. AT least 3-5 yrs. design experience in a reputable archi/interior Design company. Proficient in 3 D Studio, Max. Versatile, Pref Male

PROJECT COORDINATOR (INTERIOR)

At least 5 yrs exp. in a reputable archi / interior design co. With strong project mgt. background. Organized, Excellent / multi-tasking ability & leadership command

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Female, 3 yrs & above experience, Excellent communication skills. Computer proficient. Resourceful, Attractive & Pleasing personality. Good English

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Jose Rizal Memorial State College

The State College in Zamboanga del Norte
Dapitan City, Zamboanga del Norte

The Search for JRMSC President is now OPEN

The following are the minimum qualifications:
1. Earned doctoral degree;
2. At least five (5) years of successful leadership and administrative/ managerial experience in higher education/business corporation;
3. Has no record of final conviction of criminal, civil or administrative cases;
4. Must be a Filipino citizen of good moral character; and
5. Not more than sixty (60) years old at the time of application.

Applicants are requested to submit their application on or before Aug. 31, 2004. For the documentary requirements and other details, please contact Dr. Enrie A. Caraecle, *Chairman of the Search Committee for JRMSC Presidency*, at Tel. No. (062) 991-0777 or the Board Secretary at Telefax No. (065) 213-6444.

Failure to submit the required documents on time will mean disqualification of the applicant.

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Address : 3420 Maura St., Factor Comp., Dongalo, Parañaque City

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

SALES CLERK/PROMO
Male18-28/Female18-24yrs old; single w/pleasing personality w /exp 711-9636/732-1522

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Date : August 9, 2004
Contract No.: BCMD, 2004-008

1. Contract Name : Design, Supply, and Integration with existing Telecom Facilities, of Microwave Radio System for Mindanao Grid
2. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of design, supply, delivery to sites, integration with existing telecom facilities, testing, and commissioning of microwave radio system for 10 links at Mindanao Grid.
3. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo is P26,300,000.00.
4. Application for Eligibility is open to Filipino and Foreign manufacturers, suppliers/dealers, distributors who have the legal, technical and financial requisites of the contract to be bid.
5. Foreign bidders who wish to participate in the procurement of goods must prove that their respective countries of origin grant reciprocal rights to Filipino citizens with respect to procurement of goods by its government, in compliance with R.A. No. 5183.
6. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be included by TransCo in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the supplier's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Post qualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
7. Eligibility & Bid Documents will be available for issuance on **August 11, 2004 at the Bids and Contract Management Department**, Ground Floor, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No.: 921-23-08 upon presentation of letter of intent and a payment of non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.
8. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility Forms, statements and Bid Proposals (Technical and Price) shall be on **September 22, 2004, 1:30 P.M.** at the De La Paz Function Room, Training Center, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road TransCo, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila.

   If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working holiday, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission shall not be accepted.

   Site inspection is scheduled on **August 23-27, 2004**. Kindly coordinate with TransCo personnel regarding the details. Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **September 3, 2004** at the same venue stated in Item No. 8.
9. Manufacturers, suppliers/dealers, distributors not yet included in the TransCo's List of registered Suppliers/Contractors, who wish to participate in the public bidding, in order to facilitate eligibility checks/screening, are requested to register with the registration office mentioned above by submiting the following basic requirements, duly notarized, which should be maintained current and updated at least once a year. A certificate of Registration will be issued to suppliers/contractors upon approval.
   - Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, as appropriate;
   - Mayor's permit and/or municipal license for the current year;
   - Copy of Taxpayer's Identification Number (TIN) issued by BIR or Copy of BIR registration showing TIN;
   - Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation;
   - Audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the prospective bidder's total and current assets and liabilities inclusive of Income Tax Return and Receipt;

   For foreign bidders, the required documents applicable to entities doing business in the Philippines shall be substituted by the appropriate equivalent documents issued by foreign bidder's country, which documents shall be duly acknowledged and/or authenticated by the Philippine Consulate thereat.

   Note : Prospective bidders are allowed to submit the above requirements together with their Eligibility Forms and Documents during the deadline for the submission of Eligibility requirements and Bid proposals (Technical and Price)
10. TransCo reserves the right to reject any application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
11. The Contract to be bid shall be governed by the Provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.
12. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) DOMINADOR S. GEONZON
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–August 11 & 18, 2004)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 115, PASAY CITY

In the Matter of the Petition For
Correction of Entry on the Birth
Certificate of Minor Child
CURTIS LEE BURGOS,
SP. PROC. NO. 04-0054 CFM

BERNADETTE J. BURGOS
Respondent.
x- -x

ORDER

Before this Court is a petition filed by petitioner Bernadette J. Burgos, thru counsel, praying that after due proceedings, publication and hearing, a judgment be rendered granting the petition –

1. Ordering the cancellation of the entries on the certificate of live birth of minor child CURTIS LEE BURGOS, with Registry No. 2004-968 recorded with Office of the Civil Registrar of Pasay City, particularly the information written on the portion indicating the father of the said child;
2. Ordering the cancellation of the entries found at the dorsal side of the certificate of live birth, with Registry No. 2004-968, showing the "Affidavit of Acknowledgment/ Admission of Paternity"
3. Other reliefs and remedies deemed equitable and just are also prayed for.

Finding the petition to be sufficient in form and substance, notice is hereby given that the above entitled petition is set for hearing before this Court on August 25, 2004 at 8:30 A.M., at which place, date and time all interested persons may appear and show cause why the petition should not be granted.

Let this Order be published once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Furnish a copy of this Order to the Office of the Solicitor General, the Civil Register of Pasay City and the National Census and Statistics Office.

SO ORDERED.

Pasay City, Metro Manila, July 19, 2004.

(Original Signed) **FRANCISCO G. MENDIOLA**
Judge

(PDI–Aug. 11, 18 & 25, 2004)

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NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION

Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF SCRAP / JUNK ITEMS

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING : August 24, 2004, 2:00 PM, Solarium Multi-Purpose Hall, Building-1 Ground Floor NPC-Head Office, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding of the following items:

	Item Description and Location	Minimum Bid Price
1.	One (1) lot of unserviceable and used laboratory and office equipment, electronic devices such as; computers, printers, projector, plotter, typewriters, calculators, fax-machines, drafting-machines, broken-tables, broken-chairs, and worn-out automotive spare parts, discarded electrical-wirings and fixtures located at NPC Head Office Warehouse, Quezon City, at NPC Port Area Warehouse, Manila, and at NPC Mexico Central Warehouse, Pampanga Province.	P 202,200.00/lot
2.	One (1) lot of unserviceable and used conveyor belts, air-heater-coils, assorted scrap metals such as boiler-tubes, air-heater-elements, wire-ropes, angle bars, etc., and used office equipment located at BCFTPP, Calaca, Batangas Province.	P 251,600.00/lot
3.	One (1) lot of unserviceable and junk air-heater-elements, and assorted scrap metals like pipes, plates, angle bars and aluminum, Located at Malaya TPP, Pililia, Rizal Province.	P 227,500.00/lot
4.	One (1) lot of Industrial Chemicals, consisting of Hydro-Chloric-Acid (HCl) 35% and Sodium-Hydroxide (NaOH), 50%, Located at BTPP, Barangay Luz, Limay, Bataan Province.	P 43,200.00/lot

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. **PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S/CASHIER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE.**
2. **LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN 2003 ORIGINAL (OR CERTIFIED XEROX COPY) FOR THE BIDDER OR AN AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT (ORIGINAL) OF THE COMPANY.**

All interested parties who wish to secure bid forms for this public bidding must present a valid Tax Identification Card or Income Tax Return.

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00/set from S.V. Lomuntad, Jr. at Bldg. 1, Ground Floor, NPC Head Office, Corner Agham Road and Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or call telephone no. 924-5384. **Deadline for issuance of the bid forms is until 4:30 PM Aug. 16, 2004.**

For the Materials Management Department
(Sgd.) **FELIX B. TACATA, JR.**
OIC, MMD

(PDI-August 10, 11 & 12, 2004)

INQUIRER
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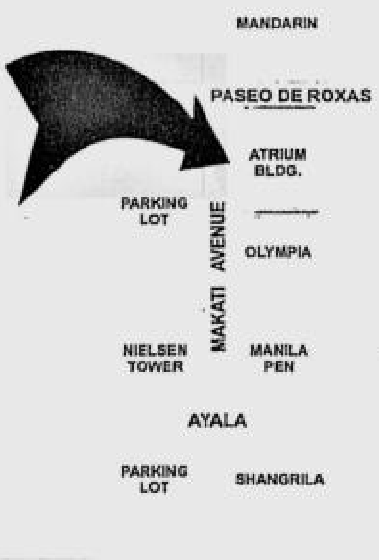

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PUBLIC ESTATES AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO BID

The PUBLIC ESTATES AUTHORITY (PEA) is inviting interested parties to participate in the public bidding for the sale or lease of eleven (11) lots on a serviced land basis, located at the Central Business Park 1 A, Bay City (formerly known as Boulevard 2000), Pasay City, for mixed use or commercial development purposes.

1. Properties for sale or lease

BLK	LOT		AREA[1](m²)	MODE
A1	1	corner	3,843	SALE
A2	1	corner	3,462	SALE
A2	2	interior	2,568	SALE
A2	3	interior	2,611	SALE
A2	4	interior	5,573	SALE
A2	5	corner	3,321	SALE
A3	1	corner	2,500	SALE
A3	2	interior	2,222	SALE
B4		portion	5,825	SALE OR LEASE
B7		portion	4,648	SALE OR LEASE
B5		whole	18,348	SALE OR LEASE

[1] Subject to final survey

2. Qualified bidders
   - Sale: Any Filipino citizen, of legal age; any government owned or controlled corporations and any government financial institution or any public corporation, which have complied with the requirements established by PEA for this bidding.
   - Lease: Any Filipino citizen, of legal age; any partnership, association or corporation, public or private of which at least 60% of the capital stock or of any interest in said capital stock belongs wholly to citizens of the Philippines and which is organized and constituted under the laws of the Philippines.
3. Interested qualified parties may obtain the Terms of Reference and Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P5,000.00) in cash or Manager's/Cashier's Check starting 12 August until 8 September 2004 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the Marketing Department, 7th Floor Legaspi Towers 2000, Paseo de Roxas, Makati MM.
4. Required pre-qualification documents and duly accomplished Bid Documents prescribed in the Terms of Reference shall be submitted to the PEA Real Estates Bid and Awards Committee (PREBAC) on 22 September 2004 on or before 1:00 PM. Public opening of bids shall follow at 1:30 PM, of the same day.
5. For further information, inquiries may be made to the Marketing Department in the above address at telephone number 817-4711 to 13 (trunk line) and 813-7103 to 7104 (direct lines).

(Sgd.) **TEODORICO C. TAGUINOD**
General Manager/CEO

(PDI--Aug. 11, 16, 21, 26, Sept. 2 & 6, 2004)

LAD-ID SCPN & DSTRN Annex "B"
CARP Form No. 5 (a)
Revised 2003

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM
Region 10
PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON
City Agrarian Reform Office
Malaybalay City

NOTICE OF COVERAGE

Pursuant to section 7 of R.A. No. 6657, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform law of 1988, the Republic of the Philippines, thru the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), hereby subjects under the coverage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program your landholding with the following description:

Name of Landowners	Title #	TD #
Adoracion Mendoza	T-7398	059-13-012-18-013
Adoracion Mendoza	T-498	059-13-012-18-011
Angelita Mendoza	P-1915	059-13-012-18-016
Bartolome Mendoza	P-1916	059-13-012-14-001
Adoracion Mendoza	P-1917	059-13-012-18-014
Adoracion Mendoza	P-1918	059-13-012-18-007

Registry of Deeds of Bukidnon	
Approximate total area	120 hectares more or less
Location	Aglayan, Malaybalay City

In this connection, we invite you to a field investigation and/or public hearing which we shall conduct on September 16, 2004, at Aglayan, Malaybalay City.

Whenever applicable, you have the right or privilege to:

1. Apply for an exemption clearance or for exclusion from CARP coverage;
2. Retain an area not exceeding five (5) hectares pursuant to Section 6 of RA 6657;
3. Nominate your children who may qualify as beneficiaries to the subject landholding; and/or
4. Submit evidence for determining just compensation of the subject landholding.

To exercise any of the above landowner rights/privileges, the necessary application or petition should be filed before the Government incurs any expense necessary for acquisition and distribution of the subject landholding, not later than 60 calendar days from receipt of this Notice of coverage. Any late legal action that may be taken beyond the said 60-day period, resulting in the nullification of this CARP proceeding, shall hold you liable for the reimbursement of all expenses that the Government has spent for acquisition and distribution of the subject landholding.

Failure to file the proper application for retention within 60 days from receipt of this Notice of Coverage is deemed a waiver of the right to retention under Section 6 RA 6657, in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations of the DAR. Within 30 from filing of the application, you shall submit to the Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer (MARO) a sketch map of the area you wish to retain, failure to do so within said 30-day period constitutes an authorization for the MARO to choose the retention area in your behalf. The DAR may disapprove your choice of retention area if not compact and contiguous.

The privilege to nominate your children who may qualify as beneficiaries is waived if you fail to submit to the MARO, within 60 days from receipt of this Notice of Coverage, the proper application with the complete names of your nominees, their addresses, birth dates, and other relevant information in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations of the DAR.

The right to question the valuation of your landholding is waived if you fail to submit to the MARO, within 60 days from receipt of this Notice of Coverage, a Statement of Production and Net Income (Annex "A" of A.O. No. 1, Series of 2003) and other evidence necessary for determining just compensation under Section 17 of RA 6657, in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations of the DAR.

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 405, dated 14 June 1990, the DAR shall request the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) to determine the land value of the subject landholding. You will receive an update as soon as the DAR receives the LBP's Memorandum of Valuation.

(Sgd.) **ALEXANDER T. BAHIAN**
City Agrarian Reform Officer

(PDI-Aug 11, 18 & 25, 2004)

Galing Pilipino Movement
National Heroes Day 2004 Celebration
"Galing Pilipino, Saludo ang Mundo!"
Student Essay-Writing Contest

In celebration of this year's National Heroes Day, GPM will raise the banner of heroism with *"Galing Pilipino, Saludo ang Mundo!"* Student Essay-Writing Contest. GPM endeavors to rouse the nation, particularly our youth, to foster a commendable sense of national pride and to engender a climate of affirmation that will make *'galing'* the brand mark of being Pilipino.

Contest Rules & Regulation

Rationale
The contest aims to determine the views of the Pilipino youth about what constitute heroism today.

Contest Objectives
- Determine the views of the Pilipino youth about the meaning and relevance of heroism today through their original works and essays.
- Demonstrate students' competencies in developing original works in English.
- Recognize and award students' excellence in writing original essays.

Eligibility
The contest is open to all bonafide high school and college students aged 16 to 21.

Subject/Theme
The essay must be original and unpublished. The contestant shall develop the essay along the subject ***"The Hero(es) of My Generation, the Galing Generation,"*** featuring an extraordinary individual that you consider your "hero" manifesting any of the following *Prinsipyong Galing Pilipino:*

Ang galing, sa sarili manggagaling.
Kung ang galing ipamamalas, 'di ka dadatnan ng malas.
Hindi kailangang trabaho'y sikat, upang galing mo'y sumikat.
Kung paglilingkod sa kapwa ang iyong hangarin,
Kahit maliit na gawa ay kahanga-hanga rin.
Sa lahat ng bagay todo bigay.
Husay sa hanapbuhay.
Hangga't di sapat, 'di paaawat.
Anuman ang sumapit, tuloy sa pag-awit.
May ibang paraan pa sa nakasanayan na.
Sa trabaho, pati buong mundo saludo!

Format
The essay must be written in English, and must not be less than 500 words but not more than 1,000 words in length. It must be in electronic form using Rich Text Format. No name or identifying mark must be indicated on the essay.

Entry Form
The essay must be accompanied by a completed Entry Form, which can be downloaded from http://www.galingpilipino.com.

Submission
Only one (1) entry per contestant shall be accepted. Each entry submitted must be the work of one (1) person and not the collective work of more than one person. The essay and the entry form should be submitted by e-mail to:

GPM Foundation Inc.
e-mail: kwcruto@galingpilipino.com
Subject: GPM National Heroes Day 2004
Student Essay-Writing Contest

ALL SUBMITTED ENTRIES SHALL BE DEEMED AS PROPERTY OF GPM FOUNDATION.

Deadline
Entries must be submitted not later than **5:00PM OF AUGUST 23, 2004.** Date and time of submission shall be validated against such information reflected on the e-mail sent.

Be ready to re-submit hard copies or print-outs of the essay and the accomplished entry form upon request of GPM Foundation. Late entries shall automatically be disqualified.

Evaluation and Judging
The essay shall be judged according to the following criteria:

Content (significance of subject to theme)	40%
Originality	20%
Narrative Style	20%
Grammar	20%
TOTAL	100%

GPM will convene a panel of judges to evaluate the entries. The decision of the judges is final.

Announcement of Winners
GPM Foundation will declare three (3) national winners in the *GPM National Heroes Day Convergence* event and on GPM supplement to be published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer on August 29. Winners shall also receive notification by mail. GPM reserves the right not to declare any winner where submissions do not meet contest standards or criteria.

Prizes
GPM will declare three (3) winners who will receive the following:

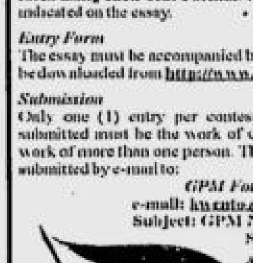
Grand Winner
- Cash Prize of P 10,000.00 (where half will go to a school-based organization of choice)
- Plaque or trophy
- Participation to GPM Young Leaders Camp in October 2004.
- Gift packs and certificates from various sponsors

First Runner-up
- Cash Prize of P 5,000.00 (where half will go to a school-based organization of choice)
- Plaque or trophy
- Participation to GPM Young Leaders Camp in October 2004.
- Gift packs and certificates from various sponsors

Second Runner-up
- Cash Prize of P 3,000.00 (where half will go to a school-based organization of choice)
- Plaque or trophy
- Participation to GPM Young Leaders Camp in October 2004.
- Gift packs and certificates from various sponsors

Prizes shall be awarded upon winner's compliance with these official rules and guidelines. By accepting the prizes, the winners grant permission to GPM Foundation and contest sponsors to use their names and entries for the purpose of advertising and promotions without further compensation.

For more particulars call GPM Foundation Inc @ (02)633-1089 or (02)631-3932 or log on to www.galingpilipino.com



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Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF NEGROS ORIENTAL
7th Judicial Region
BRANCH 37
Dumaguete City

IN RE: PETITION FOR THE DECLARATION
OF PRESUMPTIVE DEATH OF RONALDO
BUTAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 2
OF ARTICLE 41 OF THE FAMILY CODE
OF THE PHILIPPINES,
SP. PROC. NO. 4164

SUSANA SANTILLAN,
Petitioner.
x------------------------------x

ORDER

Petitioner Susana Santillan, through her counsel Atty. Rodrigo V. Icao, filed a petition for the Declaration of Presumptive Death of Ronaldo Butal.

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled petition is set for initial hearing on August 30, 2004 at 8:30 o'clock in the morning at the Session Hall of RTC-Branch 37, Dumaguete City. All interested persons may appear on said date, time and place, and show cause, if they have any, why the petition should not be granted.

Let this Order be published once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Furnish the Office of the Solicitor General and the petitioner with a copy of this Order.

SO ORDERED.

Given this 2nd day of July 2004, in the city of Dumaguete, Philippines.

(Sgd.) **JENNY LIND R. ALDECOA-DELORINO**
Presiding Judge

(PDI--Aug. 11 & 18, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the World Bank towards the cost of the Judicial Reform Support Project (JRSP) and intends to apply a portion of the loan to eligible payments under this Contract.

One of the components under the JRSP is the development of model courts in strategic areas nationwide. These model courts include *Angeles City* for Luzon: *Lapu-lapu City* for the Visayas: and *Cagayan de Oro City* for Mindanao. The upgrading of infrastructure and information technology facilities in these model courts are envisioned to showcase policy initiatives such as decentralization of administrative and financial functions and improved public access to court services.

The Supreme Court of the Philippines now invites consultancy firms to prepare the **Detailed Engineering and Design of the Renovation of the Halls of Justice in Lapu-Lapu City, Angeles City and Cagayan de Oro City**.

Interested consultancy firms must have a minimum of eight (8) years experience in the design preparation of vertical structures and minimum of two (2) projects of the same scope and nature in the last five (5) years. Interested firms are required to submit not later than 2:00 p.m. on or before the 14th day following the date of the first publication on 4 August 2004 one (1) original and nine (9) copies of their Letter of Intent, Company Profile to Justice Presbitero J. Velasco, Jr., Court Administrator and Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee for the JRSP, c/o Engr. Nestor U. Venturillo, Head, BAC-JRSP Secretariat, 6th Floor, Centennial Building, Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila.

The Consultant firm will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, January 1997 (revised September 1997, January 1999 and May 2002).

The Supreme Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids or offer, waive any defect or informality therein and accept the offer which it deems most advantageous to the Court.

4 August 2004.

(Sgd.) **JUSTICE PRESBITERO J. VELASCO, JR.**
Court Administrator and
Chairman JRSP-Bids and Awards Committe

(PDI--Aug. 4 & 11, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the World Bank towards the cost of the Judicial Reform Support Project (JRSP) and intends to apply a portion of the loan to eligible payments under this Contract.

One of the initiatives identified in the reform program is the Judicial Reform Support Project (JRSP), which is being financed by the World Bank (WB). This particular initiative seeks to 1) improve case adjudication and access to justice; 2) enhance the integrity infrastructure of the Court; and 3) strengthen the capacity of the Supreme Court to manage the Judiciary. The project will be implemented for a six (6) year period, with loan effectiveness date commencing in December 2003 and closing in December 2009. To ensure the effective and efficient realization of the JRSP, and consistent with the Judicial Reform objectives, the Supreme Court through the Program Management Office (PMO) intends to engage the services of a Change Management consultant firm.

The Supreme Court of the Philippines now invites consultancy firms as Change Management Specialist.

Interested consultancy firms must have a minimum of ten (10) years experience in the development, design, implementation and management of change management programs in the public / private sector, with a minimum of three (3) projects implemented in the last five (5) years. Experience on similar projects within the Asia/Pacific Region and specifically in the Philippines would be an advantage.

The Firm should display a sensitivity to, and cultural understanding of the environment into which the reforms are being introduced. Strong communication skills supported by a strong ethical basis are essential in a project of this sensitivity.

Interested firms are required to submit not later than 2:00 P.M. on or before the 14th day following the date of the first publication on 11 August 2004 one (1) original and nine (9) copies of their Letter of Intent and Company Profile to Justice Presbitero J. Velasco, Jr., Court Administrator and Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee for the JRSP, c/o Engr. Nestor U. Venturillo, Head, BAC-JRSP Secretariat, 6th Floor, Centennial Building, Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila.

The Consultant Firm will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, January 1997 (revised September 1997, January 1999 and May 2002).

The Supreme Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids or offers, waive any defects or informality therein and accept the offer which it deems most advantageous to the Court.

11 August, 2004.

(Sgd.) **JUSTICE PRESBITERO J. VELASCO, JR.**
Court Administrator and
Chairman JRSP-Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Aug. 11 & 18, 2004)

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In Memory of Our Beloved

Atty. RAZON TUMBOCON-HARESCO

on her 3rd Death Anniversary
August 11, 2004

*Her children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends, request the pious readers to join the family in prayer for the eternal repose of **Nanay Zoning's** soul.*

Holy Masses will be offered by her friends in the Clergy at the following churches:

Celebrated By	Church/Chapel	Address	Time
Most Rev. SOFRONIO A. BANCUD, SSS, D.D. Bishop of Cabanatuan	St. Nicholas of Tolentine Cathedral	Cabanatuan City	6:00 AM
Most Rev. FLORENTINO F. CINENSE, D.D. Bishop of Tarlac	Bishop's Chapel	Tarlac City	9:00 AM
Most Rev. JOSE ROMEO O. LAZO, D.D. Bishop of Kalibo	St. John the Baptist Cathedral	Kalibo, Aklan	6:30 AM
Most Rev. EMILIO Z. MARQUEZ, D.D. Bishop of Lucena	Monastery of Saint Claire	Sariaya, Quezon	7:00 AM
Most Rev. RAUL Q. MARTIREZ, D.D. Bishop Emeritus of San Jose de Antique	Christ the King Parish Church	Green Meadows, Quezon City	6:30 AM
Most Rev. GABRIEL V. REYES, D.D. Bishop of Antipolo	Our Lady of Peace & Good Voyage Shrine	Antipolo City	6:30 AM
Most Rev. RAMON B. VILLENA, D.D. Bishop of Bayombong	Bishop's Chapel	Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya	8:00 AM
Rev. Fr. JUANITO S. FIGURA Asst. Secretary General (Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Phils.)	CBCP Chapel	Intramuros, Manila	11:30 AM
Rev. Fr. SAMSON SILLORIQUEZ, OAR	Colegio de Sta. Rosa Chapel	Estrella St., Makati City	5:30 PM
Rev. Fr. HERMOGENES BACAREZA, SVD	Catholic Trade Chapel	Oroquieta St., Sta. Cruz, Manila	6:00 AM
Rev. Fr. FREDERICK MALACAS	St. Jude Thaddeus Church	Andagao, Kalibo, Aklan	6:00 AM
Rev. Fr. JOEBERT VILLASIS	Sto. Niño Seminary	Numancia, Aklan	6:30 AM
Rev. Fr. VICTOR SALIDO	St. Joseph the Worker Church	Numancia, Aklan	6:00 AM
Rev. Fr. JOSE RELENTE	St. Blaise Church	Torralba, Banga, Aklan	6:30 AM
Rev. Fr. MARLON RASGO	St. Isidore Church	Nabas, Aklan	6:00 AM
Rev. Fr. TITO GELITO	St. Joseph the Worker Church	Malay, Aklan	6:00 AM
Rev. Fr. GEOFFREY JIMENEZ	St. Peter the Apostle Church	Ibajay, Aklan	6:00 AM
Rev. Fr. GERMINIO FELIPE, JR.	Sacro Costato Chapel	Bakhaw Sur, Kalibo, Aklan	6:00 AM
Msgr. MICHAEL E. BALARIA	Dambana ng Ina ng Laging Saklolo	Cabanatuan City	6:00 AM 5:30 PM
Very Rev. ROBERT DELA CRUZ	Maria Assumpta Seminary	Cabanatuan City	6:00 PM
Msgr. FELIX L. HERNANDEZ, H.P.	St. Rose of Lima Church	Sta. Rosa, Nueva Ecija	6:00 AM
Rev. Fr. MIGUEL B. ADRIOSULA	St. Bartholomew Parish	San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija	6:00 AM

(Offerings/donations to the Sto. Niño Seminary, Numancia, Aklan or the Maria Assumpta Seminary, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija are deeply appreciated. Please contact Claudine or Grace at +632 8982251-54 of Haresco & Associates)

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❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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JUDGE MARIANO C.P. GONZALES

of Dingras, Ilocos Norte,
Died on August 3, 2004.
Interment August 14, 2004
at 8:00 a.m.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord." — 2 Corinthians 5:8

In Loving Memory

On the 8th Death Anniversary of

AMBROSIO BIBBY PADILLA

on August 11, 2004

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered today at 12:00 nn, ALPADI, Antipolo and at the following churches:

Sacred Heart Parish, Kamuning	5:15 am
Chapel of St. Thomas More (Ateneo-Rockwell)	6:05 pm
Sta. Maria Dela Strada Parish	6:00 pm
Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace (Our Lady of Edsa)	6:30 am
Parish of the Holy Sacrifice (U.P.)	12:00 nn
Mary the Queen Church, Greenhills	6:00 pm
St. Francis Parish-Shaw Blvd.	6:00 pm
Christ the King Parish, Green Meadows	6:00 pm
Sanctuario De San Antonio, Forbes Park	12:15 pm
St. John Mary Vianney Parish, Antipolo	6:00 am
Nuestra Señora De Gracia Parish, Guadalupe	6:00 am
St. John the Baptist Parish, Pinaglabanan	7:00 am
St. Alphonsus Mary De Liguori Parish, Magallanes	7:00 am
Sanctuario De San Jose-Greenhills	6:15 pm
St. Andrew the Apostle Parish	12:00 nn
San Lorenzo Ruiz Minor Basilica	7:30 am
San Sebastian Parish	7:00 am
Sta. Cruz Parish	8:00 am
Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene, Quiapo	7:00 am
Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Concepcion	7:30 am
Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Kanlaon, Q.C.	7:00 am
Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon Blvd., Q.C.	7:00 am

His children request relatives, friends and pious readers to please remember him in their prayers.

So dearly loved...
So fondly remembered...
So truly missed...

German Sunga Viray

Has peacefully joined his creator on August 9, 2004
at the age of 73.

His beloved wife Zenaida Q. Viray, loving children Diosdan, Christopher, Darlene, Dalia, Daisy, Doris, daughters-in-law Josephine Viray and Jocelyn Viray, son-in-law Exequiel Patron and grandchildren Kathleen, Karlo, Kim, Kayee, Kristel, Prince, Angelica and Angelina, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Mortuary and Crematory at The Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio.

Interment will be on August 14, after the 9AM mass at The Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio.

Mortuary and Crematory at The Heritage Park Fort Bonifacio

CLASSIFIEDS

HOME DEVELOPMENT MUTUAL FUND

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-IBIG FUND) is inviting all Suppliers/Distributors to a Public Bidding the Supply and Delivery of Various Computer Peripherals with an Approved Budget Ceiling of **Eleven Million Three Hundred Thousand Eighteen and 00/100 (P11,300,018.00) Pesos.**

Eligibility Requirements, Terms of Reference and Bid forms may be obtained from the Procurement Section, Task Force-General Services 7th floor Atrium of Makati Building, Makati Ave., Makati City starting **August 4, 2004** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Two Thousand Five Hundred and 00/100 (P2,500.00) Pesos.**

All interested Suppliers/Distributors are invited to attend the Pre-Bid Conference which shall be held on **August 13, 2004** at the HDMF Multi-Purpose Hall, Rm. 602, 6th floor, The Atrium of Makati Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon.

Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Opening of Bids is tentatively scheduled on **August 25, 2004** at the HDMF Multi-Purpose Hall, Rm 602, 6th floor, The Atrium of Makati Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon.

The HDMF reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informality or accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the Fund. Further, the HDMF assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses or losses that may be incurred in participating in this bidding.

For further inquiries and/or information, please call Mr. Cesar V. Racoma/Mr. Nazario U. Benedicto at 811-42-62, 894-58-15 or visit our Corporate Website at http://www.pagibigfund.gov.ph or e-mail us at hdmfgpis@info.com.ph.

(Sgd.) EMMA LINDA B. FARIA
Senior Vice President, Technical Support Group
Chair, BAC-GS

(PDI – Aug. 5 & 11, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
Center for Health Development - Eastern Visayas
EASTERN VISAYAS REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
Tacloban City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Health (DOH) through Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center (EVRMC), Hospital Bids & Awards Committee (HBAC), Tacloban City, Leyte, hereby invites sealed bids for INFRA PROJECTS AND EQUIPMENT for the hospital.

Bid documents can be secured by qualified participants from the Hospital Bids and Awards Committee (HBAC) through the Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00) for INFRA PROJECTS and Five Hundreds Pesos (Php 500.00) for EQUIPMENT.

Pre-Bid Conference, dropping and opening of bids will be held at the Chief of Hospital Conference Room, EVRMC, Tacloban City, following this schedule:

Eligibility Checking (for Infra bidders)	**August 25, 2004, 9:00 AM**
Pre-Bid Conference	**August 26, 2004, 9:00 AM**
Submission and receipt of bids	**September 8, 2004, not later than 9:00 AM (for Infra)** **September 9, 2004, not later than 9:00 AM (for equipment)**

A Bidder's Bond in the form of Cash or Manager's Check in an amount equivalent to one percent (1%) of the approved budget for the contract must accompany each bid.

1. Hospital Equipment		P6,230,630.00
2. Infra Projects		P1,909,261.95
a. Repair of ICU	P1,000,000.00	
b. Repair of NICU	80,000.00	
c. Repair of Doctor's Quarters	215,503.95	
d. Repair of Admin. Roofing	613,758.00	

For particulars, please see Dr. Flora A. de la Peña, Chair or its Secretariat, HBAC, with Tel. Nos. (053) 321-3136, 321-9874 & 321-3129, EVRMC, Tacloban City or email add: evrmc@mozcom.com

(Sgd.) **FLORA A. DE LA PEÑA, MD., FPSP**
Chair, Hospital Bids and Awards Committee

NOTED:
(Sgd.) **ADELAIDA AMARGA-ASPERIN, MD., MHA**
Chief of Hospital III

(PDI--Aug. 11 & 18, 2004)

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Sharing the dream of Olympic glory

THE QUEST for gold and glory by the country's best and brightest athletes got a big boost with Bounty Agro Ventures Inc (Bavi) and Tyson Agro Ventures Inc (Tavi) providing a golden package of incentives for the first-ever winner of a gold medal.

Since the Philippines participated in the Olympic Games, not one Filipino athlete has ever won the gold. Two boxers cane close but had to settle only for silver-Anthony Villanueva in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics and Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco in the Centennial Games of Atlanta in 1996.

In Athens, where the modern Olympic Games was first held in 1896, the Filipino athlete's dream lives on. It might just be there where the Philippines' best will finally strike gold.

Bavi and Tavi share this dream. They will be cheering the Filipino bets with a rewards package as a tribute to their athletic skill and prowess. The package includes: gold medal winner-P1 million; silver medal winner-P500,000, and bronze medal winner-P250,000.

The offer was formalized recently with the signing of a memorandum of agreement between Philippine Olympics Committee president Celso Dayrit and Bavi president Ronald Mascarinas.

"For us, the Olympics is a true measure of the company's commitment to excellence," says Mascarinas. "We will rally to the challenge our athletes will face in the world's greatest sporting event."

The Philippine contingent will compete against thousands of athletes from 220 nations who are vying to capture the coveted medal awards in Athens for the 2004 Olympic Games.

Bavi and Tavi are the producers of Bounty Fresh Chicken, adjudged the best fresh chicken in the country by the recently concluded 1st National Shopper's Choice Awards. Bounty Fresh Chicken bagged first prize in the Fresh Chicken National Category.

CAMPAIGN FOR GOLD AT ATHENS OLYMPICS

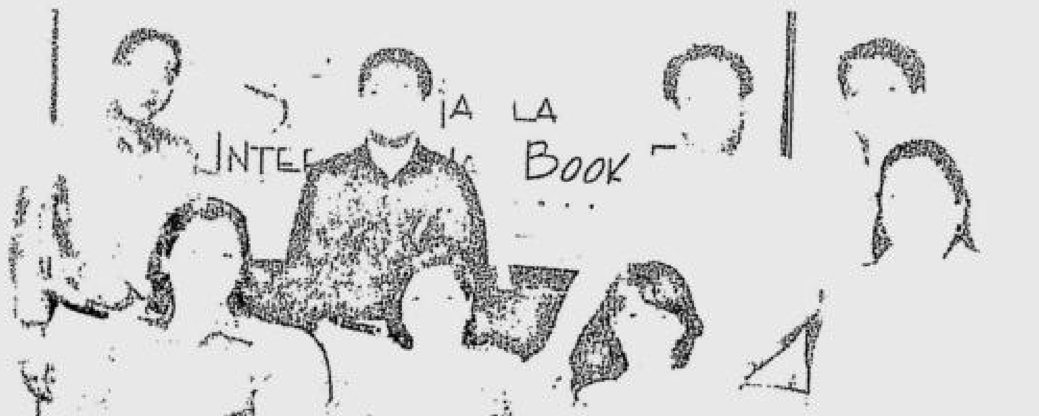
An MOA was recently inked by Philippine Olympics Committee president Celso Dayrit (3rd from left) and Bavi president Ronald Mascarinas (4th from left) in ceremonies held recently. Bavi has pledged to provide cash incentives to the Filipino athletes vying for gold at the 2004 Athens Olympics to motivate them to excel in the Games and bring home medals for the country. Also shown are (from left) Romeo Ribano, secretary general of the Philippine Olympic Committee, Steve Hontiveros, Athens Chef de Mission, and Mark Trias, Bavi marketing manager.

MEDOCAP IN RIZAL

Elements of the Public Affairs Service AFP Reserve Command, in conjunction with the 2nd Infantry Division Jungle Fighters, conducted recently a medical, dental, optical, deworming and milkfeeding operation in the hinterlands of Barangay Santa Ines, Tanay, Rizal, benefiting over 1,800 patients including the distribution of 200 free eyeglasses, electric toothbrushes and nutritional products. Shown are the doctors Maj A. Caramat (PA), Maj. B. Soreno (PA) and Maj R. Ramones (PA). In the background are Lt. Col. Jaime Yangzon (PA) of AFPRescom handing out prescriptions to patients.

AIM, CITIBANK PARTNER FOR I-LEAD

Asian Institute of Management (AIM), the premier graduate school of management in Asia, and Citibank, the global leader in financial services, have joined forces to establish an institute that promotes leadership-I-Lead or the Institute for Leadership Excellence and Accelerated Development. Sealing the partnership, from left, are Sonny B. Coloma, AIM dean, executive education and lifelong learning center, Nina Aguas, Citibank country business manager, Roger Collantes, Citibank director of Asia Pacific consumer bank training and development and Roberto de Ocampo, AIM president. I-Lead, a two-way partnership between Citibank and AIM, aims to produce Asian leaders who will bring their organizations to new heights and promote the accelerated growth and development of emerging Asian economies.



BOOK FAIR GETS ALL OUT SUPPORT

Booksellers and publishers organizations gather anew to support the 25th Manila International Book Fair (MIBF) slated from Aug. 11 to 15 at the World Trade Center, Pasay City. The paramount event in the publishing industry aiming to promote reading and literacy, MIBF partners with the Book Development Association of the Philippines (BDAP), the Publishers Representatives Organization of the Philippines (PROP) and the Philippine Booksellers Association Inc (PBAI) to discuss the challenges facing the publishing industry, promote new titles to a mass market, and improve the quality of books. Present at the agreement are (from left, seated) Irene Lloren, president of Primetrade Asia, MIBF organizer, Evelyn Millar, PBAI internal affairs vice president, Juliet Gako, National Bookstore purchasing manager. Standing, from left, are Lirio Sandoval, BDAP president, Orlando de Vera, PROP chair, Felicito Abiva, member of the BDAP board of advisers, Fidel de Jesus, PBAI treasurer, and Tinette Capistrano, Primetrade Asia vice president.

'EskAPO dos: Papel, Gunting Rock!!!'

THE ALPHA Phi Omega International Collegiate Service Fraternity and Sorority-University of the Philippines Manila Chapter, in cooperation with 99.5 RT, presents "eskAPO dos: Papel Gunting Rock!!!", a rock concert featuring the bands Bamboo, Cambio, and Stonefree as the main performers with other local bands, namely Stonecigars, Paspasan, Jara, Pumpernickle and G2 and the Boondocks. The concert will be held at the Little Theater of the College of Arts and Sciences in UP Manila on Aug. 13, at 6 p.m. This is a fund-raising concert for the medical mission that will be done in Zone 69 Barangay 654, Intramuros, Manila. The sponsors that made this event possible are Gerry's Grill Malate, Pulp Magazine and Popeye's Chicken and Biscuits.

Union Bank revamps core technology with TIM and Infosys

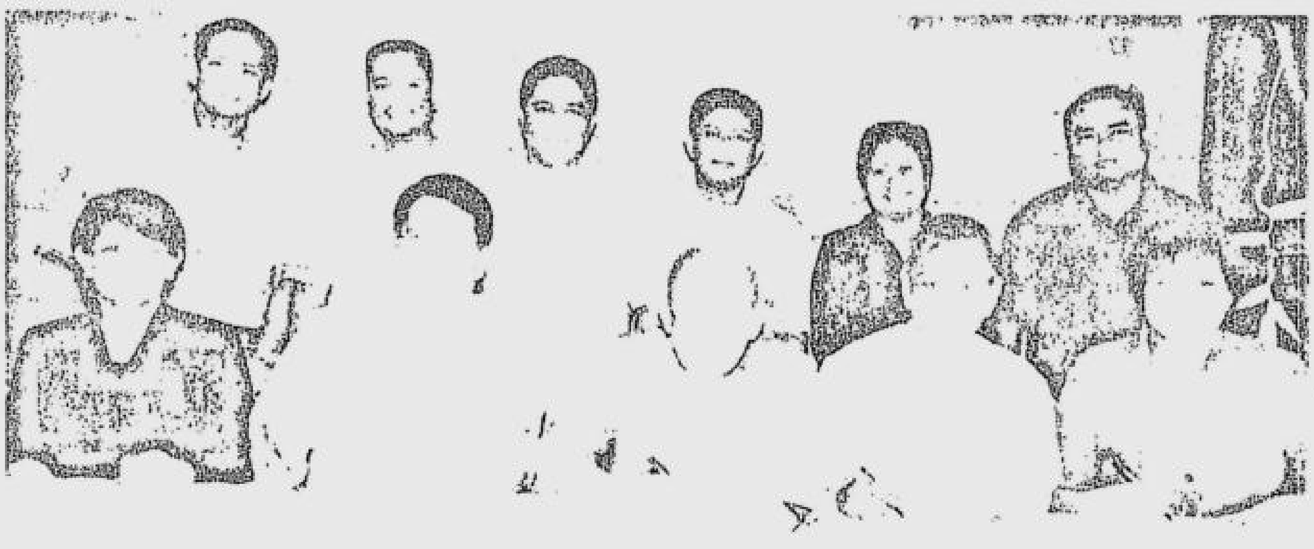
TOTAL Information Management Corp (TIM) announced it has signed a strategic tripartite agreement with Infosys Technologies and Union Bank of the Philippines to enable the bank to shift from its current core banking system to an open systems environment using Finacle and SUN Servers.

Under the agreement, TIM-the all-Filipino IT company, will provide Finacle, a universal banking solution in Union Bank's 120 branches all over the country replacing its existing mainframe-based core banking solution. The project is expecting completion by the end of 2004.

Back from the contract signing in India, TIM president Jose Mari M. Antunez is "very certain that most of the financial institutions in the Philippines will soon follow suit not only because of the flexibility and state-of-the-art technology of the solution, but also because of lower total cost of ownership which could amount to hundreds of millions of pesos in savings."

Union Bank of the Philippines' chair and CEO Justo A. Ortiz says: "This is clearly a strategic initiative to address our bank's new business requirements, respond to market changes, enhance our customer experience and empower our employees."

Finacle is a completely web-based, customer-centric, universal banking software from Infosys used for retail, corporate, community and private banking transactions. It won the prestigious "Banker Technology Awards 2004."



ABC SIMULCASTS IN BICOL VIA PBN BROADCASTING NETWORK

ABC strengthened its presence in the south with an agreement to simulcast its primetime programming in the Bicol region through PBN Broadcasting Network Inc, owner and operator of TV-5 Naga and TV-6 Legaspi and tagged as the 'Pioneer Radio-TV Network in Bicolandia'. The agreement signed July 19 at Dreambar Makati is part of ABC's goal to expand and fortify its reach in the provinces. Present as signatories were (seated from left) ABC VP for legal department lawyer Christine C. Ona, ABC EVP and COO Reggie D. Galura, PBN Broadcasting Network Inc president and chair of the board Jorge D. Bayona, ABC VP for provincial network operations Rino M. Basilio, and PBN Broadcasting Network EVP Brenda B. Locsin. Also present to witness the event were officers from different PBN branches (standing from left) DZ6B-AM Legazpi assistant program director Henry A. Maceda, DZMD-AM Daet, Camarines Norte station manager Sherwin Q. Asis, PBN general manager Glenn J. Barcelon, DZMS-AM Sorsogon station manager Ramil A. Marianito, TVJ Naga assistant station manager Elaine P. Orong, and DZ6B-AM Legaspi program director Johnny A. Dematera.

CTK Integrated Security Group: Total vehicle protection

WHEN Edison Cham established CTK Inc in 1992, his goals were modest and within his reach. His initial target market was a closely-knit circle-private vehicle owners who wanted their SUVs bulletproofed for their own protection-and he didn¹t even work on the vehicles themselves.

"It all started with just the materials, really," recalls Cham. "I used to import the materials used for the building of armored vehicles. I was a mere supplier. With what I had, I started tinkering with a Pajero and came up with an armored unit that was tough enough to withstand bullets from an M16 rifle. One of my clients heard about it, asked about it, tested it and purchased it on the spot. One client was all it took to make this business take off."

The satisfaction of that one client led Cham to explore building armored vehicles himself. And, from tending to the needs of a few, CTK went into producing armored vehicles for banking institutions. With Cham's dedication and access to the right materials, it didn't take long for CTK to bite off a big chunk from the local armored vehicle market. Three years after it was formally established, CTK Inc had already cornered 80 percent of the armored vehicle market.

In the short time that CTK had been in business, it had gained such a solid reputation that on the occasion of Pope John Paul II¹s second visit to the Philippines in 1995, the company was commissioned to build the famous "Pope Mobile". Microsoft chair William "Bill" Gates III also chose a CTK-furnished vehicle as his official carrier when he visited the country in 1998. "We probably gained a good reputation because of our continuous desire to improve. We conduct researches and continuously develop materials and designs so that we can provide total customer satisfaction," says Cham.

Cham explains, for example, that even as CTK still accepts single, private projects, there are set limitations for the good of his clients. "You can't just fit any vehicle with armor. There are specifications that fit vehicles and their respective power ratings and weights-and we work within those parameters. We explain to all who want to avail themselves of our services the limitations of both their vehicles and the materials involved. Best of all, we give them options. These options are designed to fit the varying needs and budgets of our clients," he says.

The clients now come in droves. Most of the country's banking institutions, for example, have fleets not just made but even managed by CTK. And this is something Cham is proud to have introduced into the local market. "Banks used to purchase fleets of armored vehicles. But these are very expensive to maintain. What we did was introduce a leasing program where we take care of the fleets for a fee. That way, the banks also get to avail themselves of the other services of CTK," shares Cham.

The total vehicle protection program that CTK offers now goes beyond vehicle armoring. CTK is also now heavily into the preparation, application and installation of other security devices made specifically for vehicles. In fact, because of the armored fleet vehicle service that the company now provides, it already has its own central monitoring station that can trace a vehicle¹s whereabouts in and around Metro Manila via computerized satellite links.

Best of all, CTK Inc has made vehicle protection accessible to just about anyone who's willing to invest in their and their loved ones' safety. Cham reveals that even mini-SUVs can now be fitted with lightweight armoring at a very reasonable price. Which is good news whichever way you look at it.

For further inquiries regarding CTK Inc and its services, call 740-8151, e-mail ctk@mozcom.com or check out www.ctkinc.com.

More PEP on pages B6, B7 and B12

Mongols, Stonefree rock the walls

ASIAN Social Institute and Department of Tourism, in cooperation with National Commission for Culture and the Arts and Viva Records Corp present "Rock the Walls," a free concert in celebration of the 5th International Youth Day on Aug. 13, 7 p.m. at the Clamshell 1, Intramuros, Manila. Dubbed as "Solidarity Night", the concert will gather a thousand youth from different parts of the Philippines and Asia-Pacific to enjoy the music of our country's top performers today such as Cynthia Alexander, Fuseboxx, Silent Sanctuary, Tanglaw Sining, Crabnebula, Stringskin and Lana J., Stonefree and Mongols. For more information, visit www.iyd2004.org or call Tracey Santiago of Artwheel Company Inc at telefax 373-3347 or Vince Pilien at 0918-9344240.

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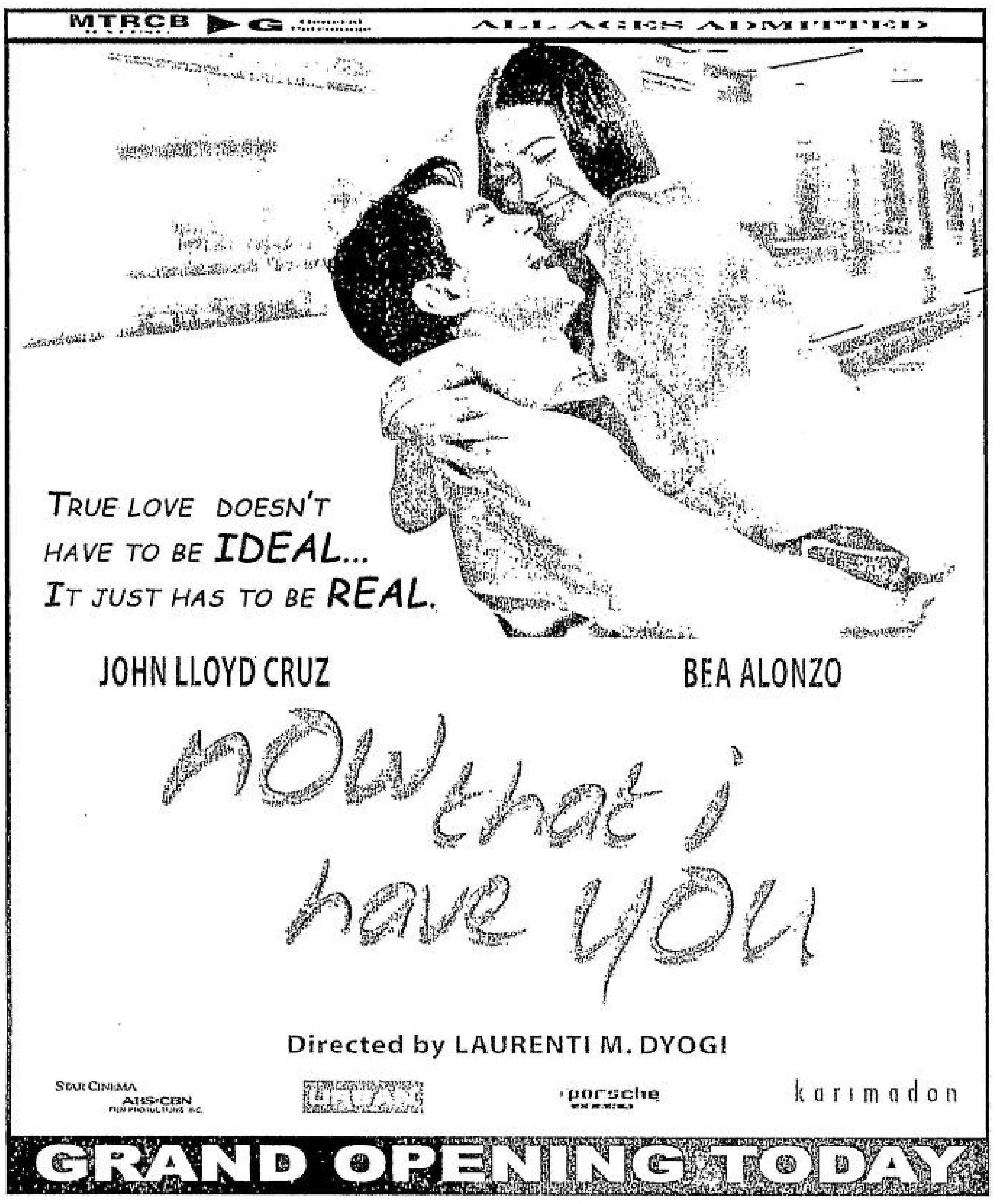
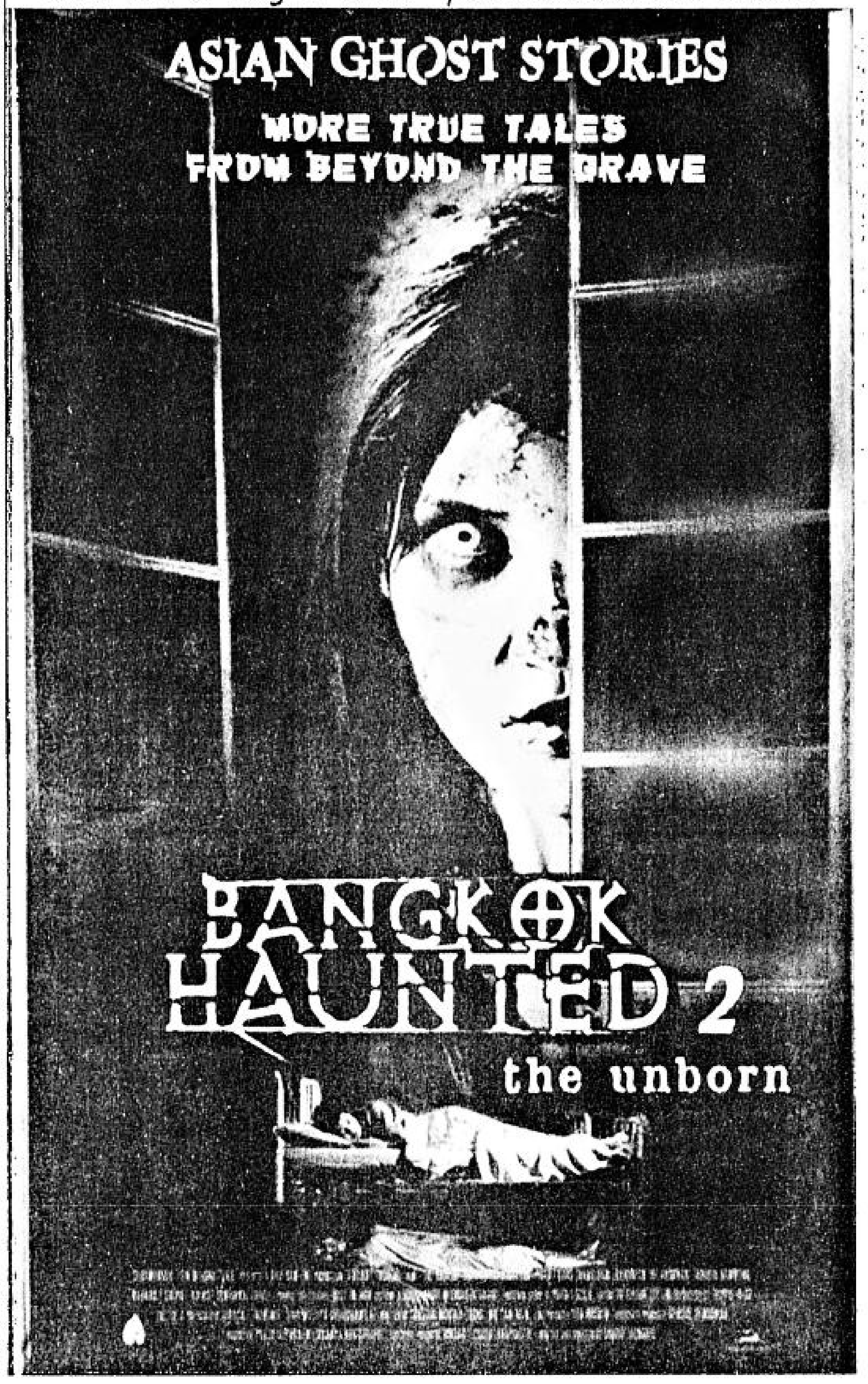
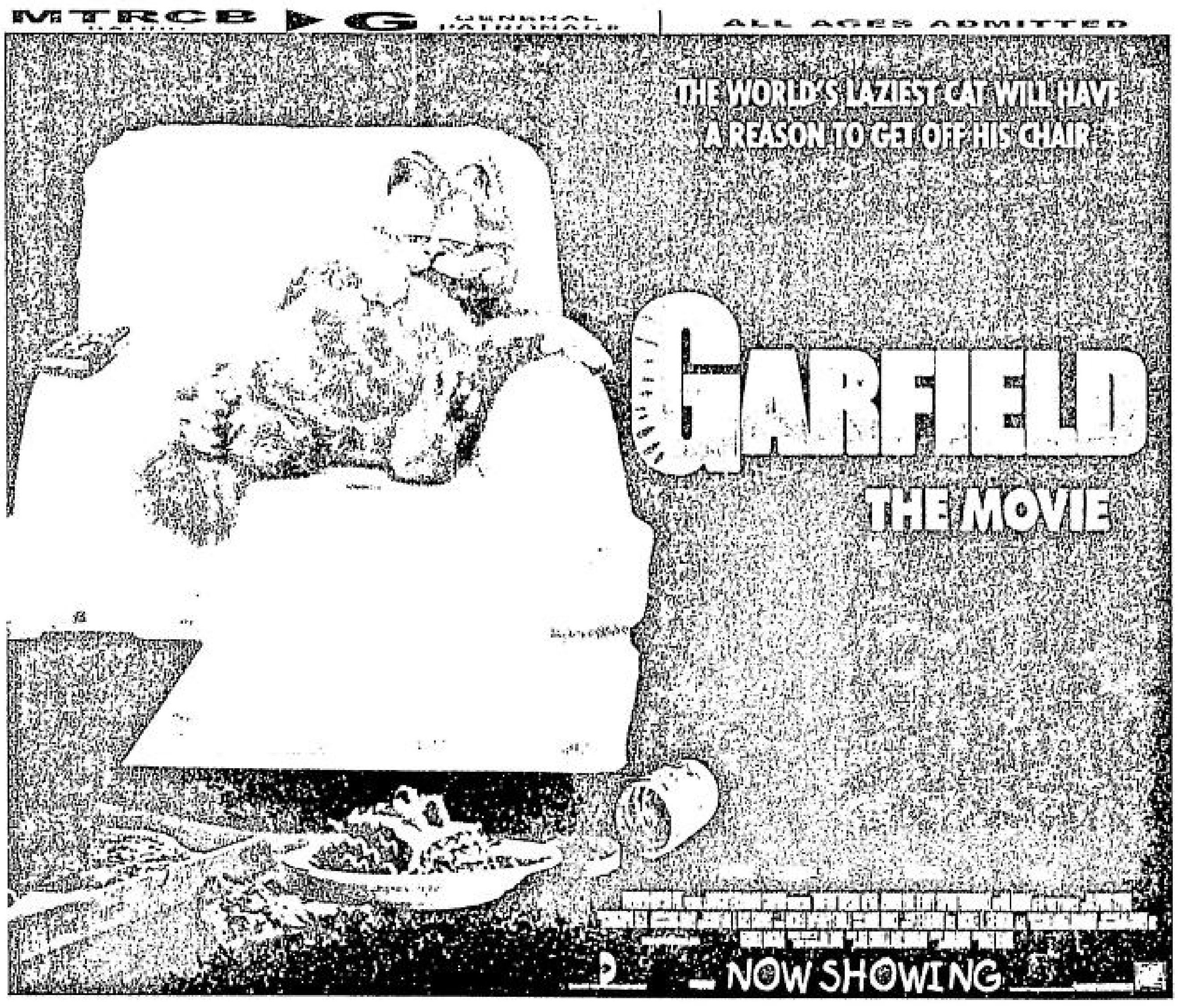
GARFIELD GP 12:30,2:20,4:10, 6:00,7:50,9:40	CINDERELLA STORY GP 12:00,2:00,4:00, 6:00,8:00,10:00	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU PG13 12:20,2:45,5:10,7:35,10:00
COLLATERAL R13 11:50,2:25,5:00,7:35,10:10	SYLVIA R13 12:00,2:20,4:40,7:00,9:20	THE VILLAGE PG13 12:40,3:05,5:30,7:55,10:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

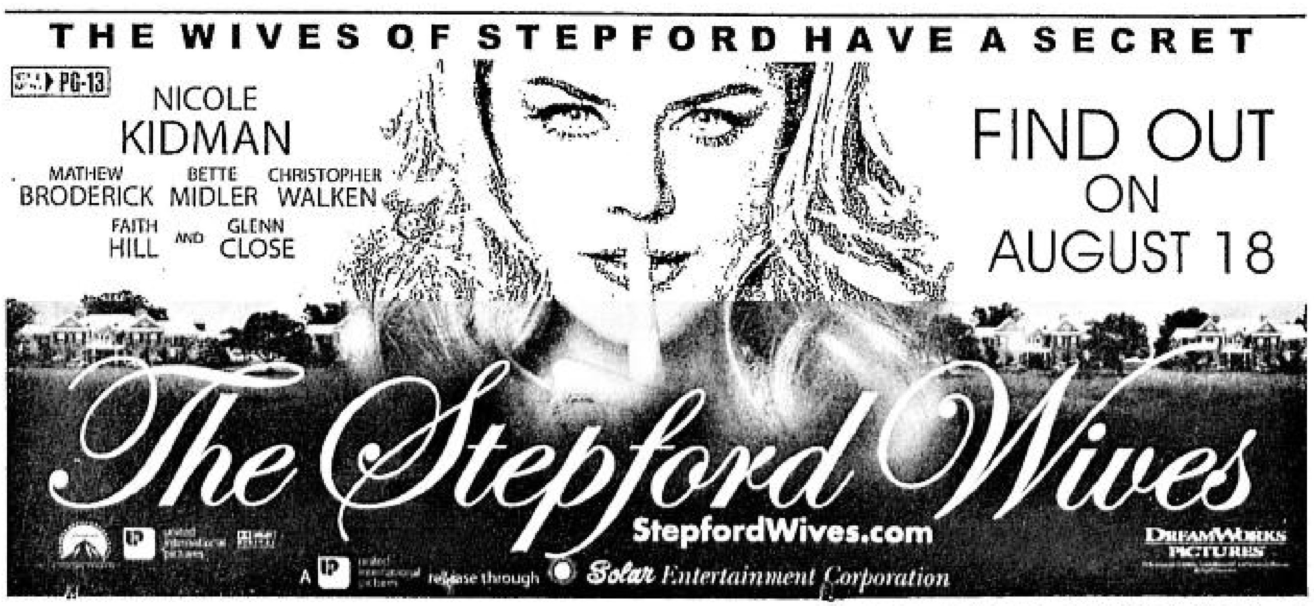

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage
ALL AGES ADMITTED
TRUE LOVE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE IDEAL... IT JUST HAS TO BE REAL.
JOHN LLOYD CRUZ
BEA ALONZO
now that i have you
Directed by LAURENTI M. DYOGI
STAR CINEMA
ABS-CBN
porsche
karimadon
GRAND OPENING TODAY

OPENS AUGUST 18
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP
Don't sleep alone, don't switch off the lights at night,
Real terror begins after you watched this movie.


ASIAN GHOST STORIES
MORE TRUE TALES FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE
BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
the unborn


MTRCB ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE
ALL AGES ADMITTED
THE WORLD'S LAZIEST CAT WILL HAVE A REASON TO GET OFF HIS CHAIR
GARFIELD
THE MOVIE
NOW SHOWING

GRAND OPENING TODAY
MTRCB ▶ R-13
"The Greatest Love Story of All Time."
Life is too small to contain her.
Based on a true story
Gwyneth PALTROW
Daniel CRAIG
Sylvia
Passion beyond words


THE WIVES OF STEPFORD HAVE A SECRET
PG-13
NICOLE KIDMAN
MATHEW BRODERICK
BETTE MIDLER
CHRISTOPHER WALKEN
FAITH HILL AND GLENN CLOSE
FIND OUT ON AUGUST 18
The Stepford Wives
StepfordWives.com
DREAMWORKS PICTURES
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Editor Raul O. Marcelo
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Dermatologists promote well-being

By Candy G. Villanueva

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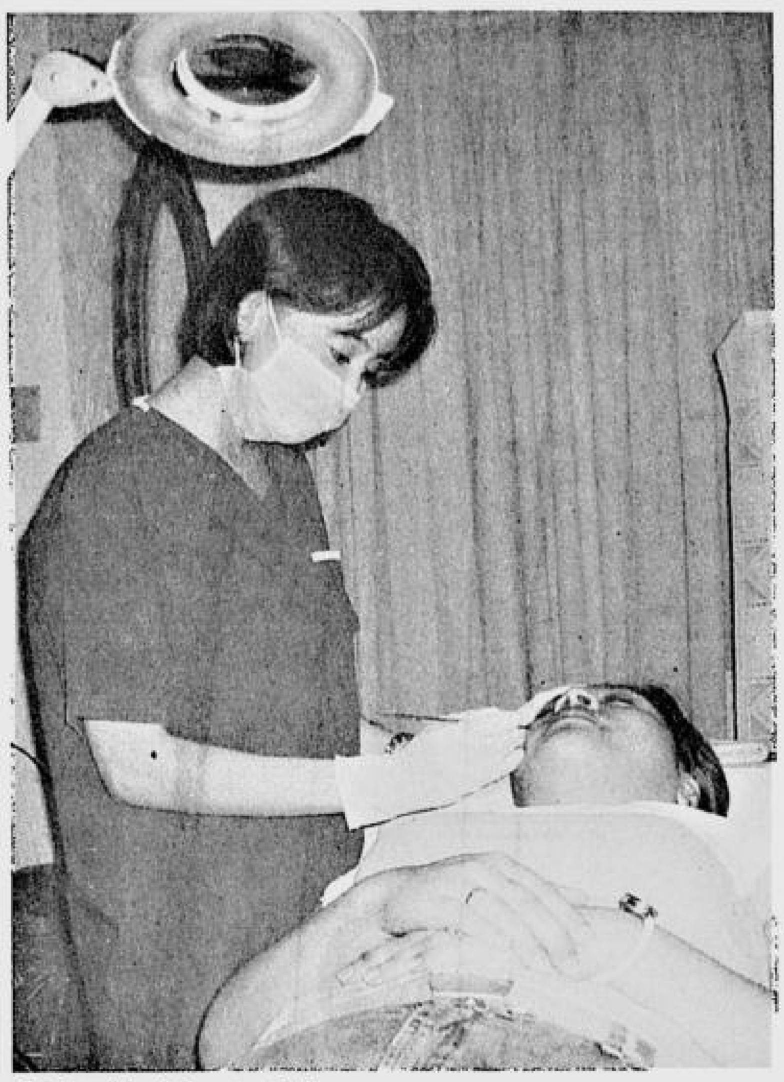
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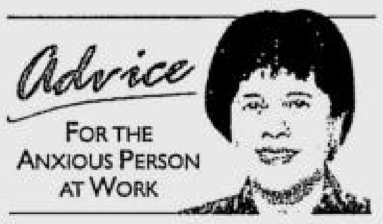
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Congratulations! The liberal arts background you have was put into good use in your business. The challenge for you is how to retain current customers and attract new ones. You are in a faddish business. In this global and complex business environment, fashion is one of the more volatile businesses that would require a constant anticipation of trends and great customer responsiveness.

You are right about targeting customer loyalty. The heart of every successful business is a core of loyal customers. According to Frederick Reichheld in his book "The Loyalty Effect," business loyalty is the hidden force behind growth, profits and lasting value. He also mentions that business loyalty has three interdependent dimensions—customer loyalty, employee loyalty and investor loyalty (if yours is a listed company.)

What can you do? First, discover your value proposition to the customer. What do you have to offer? You can offer any of the following value propositions: low cost, customer intimacy or product leadership.

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On the second option, you make it a point to really know your customer. You are aware of both their current and emerging needs, and you seek to fulfill them in a total way. Through the depth of customer relationship you are able to "mine" them. They are willing to pay more for the excellent service they get from your store.

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You have to choose a focused value proposition. The worst part is to straddle all the three. Or to swing from one value strategy to the other totally confusing your customer.

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Third, get to know your customers. What is their current customer experience? Who are they? What do they want? Then, try to arrive at your unique value proposition. Once you have made the selection, you can look at the implications of your choice in terms of system and structure.

Fourth, you have to review your organization: your people, systems, structure, processes, your products and services and assess how well they function in unity to deliver the value you desire. Some companies think that simply coming out with a customer loyalty program automatically improves customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is more complex that simply loyalty programs.

Fifth, pursue an improvement program to improve customer loyalty. There are important factors in terms of successful change. One is leadership commitment. Make sure you consistently convey the customers service vision through your words and action. Then, involve employees, make sure they understand the role they have to play towards customer retention. Finally, provide employees performance support in terms of training and communications to learn appropriate practice.

You can use promotions to attract new customers. As to whether to hire a marketing person, it all depends on whether your need is continuous or one shot, or if you can afford to hire one considering your financial capability. Definitely, a marketing person, if the right hire, can be an asset. Or you may wish to get a marketing consultant who can help you plan.

All my wishes for improved customer retention and consequently more profit for your business.

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Working parents can help their kids excel

WORKING MOM
An Mercado Alcantara

AND SO WE were off to too quick a start. Schoolwork descended upon us in June, and with it the ritual homework battles began. In just a few weeks, first quarter exams will be here and many a working mom will be rushing home to draft practice math tests, help our kids recite scientific names, and to build up vocabulary words. All this, of course, on top of our third quarter business targets, deadlines, and all the other jobs marked urgent.

Each quarter, from Grade 1 to Grade 5, I wondered how we got through the last stretch of exams. We found ways, somehow, to be in two places at one time. My office computer has files of math tests I've drafted even as I was writing off memos. My co-editors recall times when, among the magazine on my desk, they found grade four science books. I used to read through them between meetings, draw up study guides, which I would then fax home to my waiting daughter. She'd call me when she was done and we'd go through the answers together.

Why go through all this trouble? Why not hire a tutor? A tutor is, after all, the tried-and-tested pinch-hitter for working moms. Because tutors do not make as big an impact on the life of our child as we do. And because if we couch our kids well enough from grade one to grade five, we can retire from homework when they reach Grade 6! A tutor-dependent child may have to be tutored all the way to high school because he may have learned the answers to school but not acquired the habits to do work on his own.

These are two of the major conclusions Dr. Queena Lee-Chua, multi-awarded psychologist and education expert, and Maribel S. Dionisio, family counselor and concerned parent, reached when they embarked on their study to determine the best practices of parents whose children excelled in the Ateneo High School.

"In our tutor-obsessed culture, the most surprising finding," says Queena, "is that the majority of honor students (at the Ateneo High School)—more than 80 percent—have never had tutors after school."

How did they achieve on their own? "Many parents tutored their children until Grade 4 or 5," they explained. After Grade 5, "these students had already developed the good study habits and can study well on their own." In fact, in the higher grades, the parents are consulted only on complicated topics. They are more free to simply support and guide their children.

"Investing time and effort especially in the early years provides a steady foundation for lifelong learning and may prevent future problems," says Maribel. What is most important is that through the interaction of the parent and the child, the child experiences how important learning is (so important that mom or dad takes time out from her work to help) and that together they are able to set up the discipline for him to go at it on his own.

But when our kids are in Grade 1 to 5, this is usually the time when we are also building the foundation of our career. If you had your children in your mid-twenties, by the time your kids enter grade school, this is also the time when you're probably being eyed for higher management positions. This is also the time when you have to be more visible at work. How then will you manage homework time and exam week?

To answer this question, Working Mom magazine, together with Queena and Maribel, held a focus group discussion among the working parents of high-achieving Ateneo High School students. The following are three of the major factors that helped them be with their kids despite their workload.

- At least one of the parents had flexible work hours. Entrepreneur parents had the advantage of owning their own time. They could schedule their day so that at least one of them would be home for the kids after school. Other families had one parent holding a nine-to-five job, while the other had more flexible work hours. In this situation, the parent who had flexi-hours, whether that was the mom or the dad, took on the job of helping the kids with homework.
- They worked and lived near the school. Cutting commute-time to work made it easier for parents to be home when their kids needed them. A mother who worked 15-minutes away from home could be home before 6 p.m., which is enough time to check homework and chat with the kids.
- Dad and mom shared the responsibility of teaching their kids. The parents of high-achieving kids toggled the teaching chores between themselves. Whoever had more time, took over. There was a very clear understanding that passing on good study habits was a joint endeavor.

If you'd like to know more about the successful study strategies of parents with high-achieving kids, Queena and Maribel will be running a seminar called, Helping Our Children Excel in School (Real-Life Successful Family Strategies: Doing Well in the Ateneo) on Saturday, Sept. 11 at 7:30 a.m., Rev. Henry Lee Irwin, S.J. Theatre, Ateneo de Manila Grade School. Admission is free but it's best to make a reservation. Kindly call or e-mail us on or before Friday, Sept. 3, at the Office of Planning and Development and Alumni Affairs 426-6081 to 82 or 426-6001 loc. 4083, look for Jeng.

(An Mercado-Alcantara is founding editor of Working Mom magazine published by ABS-CBN Publishing, Inc. You may reach her at an_alcantara@abs.pinoy-central.com)

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How did they achieve on their own? "Many parents tutored their children until Grade 4 or 5," they explained. After Grade 5, "these students had already developed the good study habits and can study well on their own." In fact, in the higher grades, the parents are consulted only on complicated topics. They are more free to simply support and guide their children.

"Investing time and effort especially in the early years provides a steady foundation for lifelong learning and may prevent future problems," says Maribel. What is most important is that through the interaction of the parent and the child, the child experiences how important learning is (so important that mom or dad takes time out from her work to help) and that together they are able to set up the discipline for him to go at it on his own.

But when our kids are in Grade 1 to 5, this is usually the time when we are also building the foundation of our career. If you had your children in your mid-twenties, by the time your kids enter grade school, this is also the time when you're probably being eyed for higher management positions. This is also the time when you have to be more visible at work. How then will you manage homework time and exam week?

To answer this question, Working Mom magazine, together with Queena and Maribel, held a focus group discussion among the working parents of high-achieving Ateneo High School students. The following are three of the major factors that helped them be with their kids despite their workload.

- At least one of the parents had flexible work hours. Entrepreneur parents had the advantage of owning their own time. They could schedule their day so that at least one of them would be home for the kids after school. Other families had one parent holding a nine-to-five job, while the other had more flexible work hours. In this situation, the parent who had flexi-hours, whether that was the mom or the dad, took on the job of helping the kids with homework.
- They worked and lived near the school. Cutting commute-time to work made it easier for parents to be home when their kids needed them. A mother who worked 15-minutes away from home could be home before 6 p.m., which is enough time to check homework and chat with the kids.
- Dad and mom shared the responsibility of teaching their kids. The parents of high-achieving kids toggled the teaching chores between themselves. Whoever had more time, took over. There was a very clear understanding that passing on good study habits was a joint endeavor.

If you'd like to know more about the successful study strategies of parents with high-achieving kids, Queena and Maribel will be running a seminar called, Helping Our Children Excel in School (Real-Life Successful Family Strategies: Doing Well in the Ateneo) on Saturday, Sept. 11 at 7:30 a.m., Rev. Henry Lee Irwin, S.J. Theatre, Ateneo de Manila Grade School. Admission is free but it's best to make a reservation. Kindly call or e-mail us on or before Friday, Sept. 3, at the Office of Planning and Development and Alumni Affairs 426-6081 to 82 or 426-6001 loc. 4083, look for Jeng.

(*An Mercado-Alcantara is founding editor of Working Mom magazine published by ABS-CBN Publishing, Inc. You may reach her at* an_alcantara@abs.pinoycentral.com)

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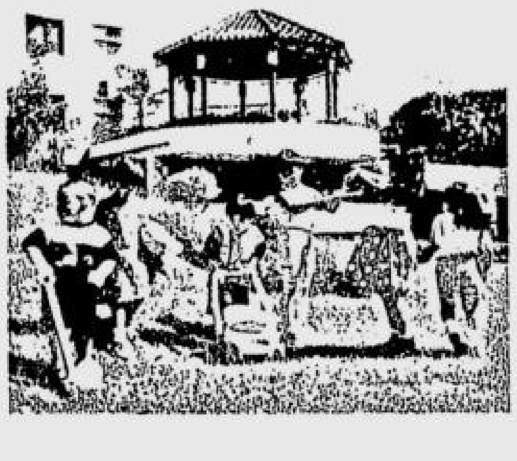

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Philippine Ragnarok Online RPG

'RoKing' in Korea

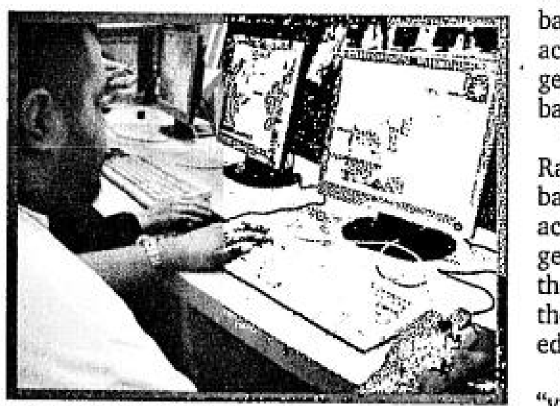
Pinoy diehards get Ragnarok-crazy in the land of the morning calm

Text and photos by Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

MANY people deem Ragnarok Online as nothing but a waste of precious time and money. But when there's 100 million Korean won (that's $85,000 to you, thank you very much) at stake at the first Ragnarok World Championship (RWC), it's the nerds that get the last laugh.

The RWC was held in Seoul, Korea, last July 17 and 18. A total of 162 players from Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Thailand, China, USA, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and of course, the Philippines, flew in to strut their stuff at the Pacific Hall in COEX, site of the competition and convention.

In case you haven't been following the Philippine Guild Wars, two teams—Rebirth and Unholy—won bragging rights to fly to Korea to compete at the 2004 RWC.


REBIRTH'S Christopher Chavez revs up his character.

After praying that they be granted Korean visas, Rebirth, Unholy, the fab guys at Level-Up and selected press members packed their bags to begin their Ragnarok adventure.

We're not in Kansas anymore...

The Ragnarok convention at COEX is a fanatic's paradise—fan art booths, an RO store, video game previews, and several interactive games took up the enormous hall. The stage was equipped with huge monitors and computer stations in the center.

The opening ceremony had each delegation marching up to the stage with its country flag. Then there was a dance performance. Perhaps a sneak peak at Juno, the newest addition to Philippine Ragnarok Online that features the new job. Dancer? Maybe.

It's hard to focus on belly-baring Korean girls slink onstage when you're surrounded by everything Ragnarok. It was not even noon yet and already kids fully dressed up in Ragnarok costumes were already popping up, posing with fellow fans in true costume play (better known as Cosplay) fashion.

Gravity Corporation, which is responsible for making Ragnarok Online a reality, didn't hold back on the goodies. A long line soon formed across the hall, with kids and adults waiting to get their goodie bags: a sleek Ragnarok plastic bag filled with posters, fans and notebooks.

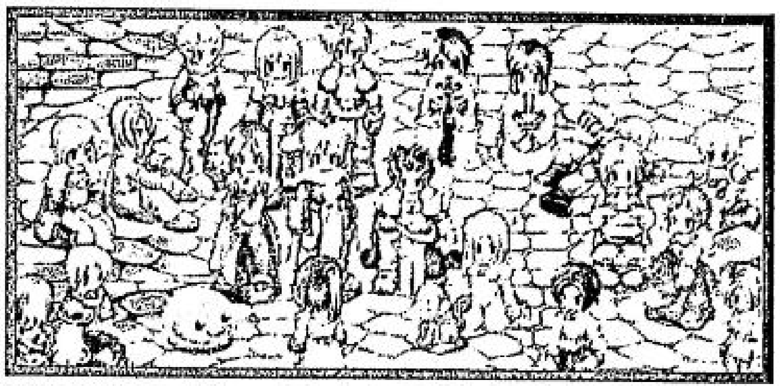
The RO store was also brimming with more Ragnarok goodies: plush toys, shirts, piggy banks, and anything you can slap an RO character on was for sale. Those looking for headgear (say, a Kafra band?) found it right beside the stage was Prontera, where fans set up their own shops, selling mostly pins, laminated artworks, comic books and clay figurines.

Guests could pick up a passport and get "visas" by participating in the many games set

ROKING/ C2

RAGNAROK creator Myung Jing Lee, whom reporter Mark Navarro harassed

SUPER troopers, aka the cheerleading squad. Level Up!'s Mark Reyes, Rebirth's Chavez, Level-Up!'s Joel Borja and Paul and Rebirth's Carlo


ONE of them could be a virtual you in Philippine Ragnarok Online.

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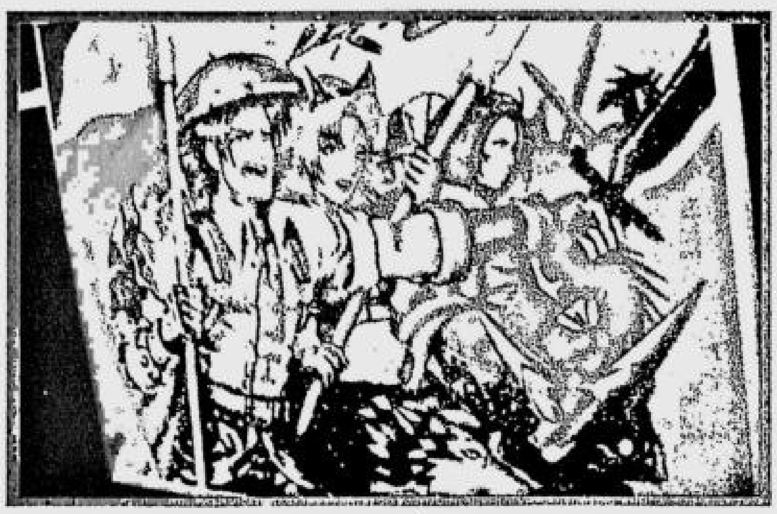
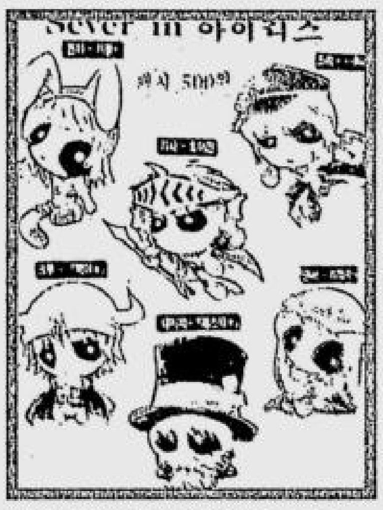


IMAGINE if the KKK had wizards and priests…



THE POWERPUFF Girls get a makeover at a Prontera booth.

PARE, lumabas na ba yung Angeling?

'RoKing' in Korea

From page C1

up in each "continent." Asia had bull rides and Europe had an archer's course. Those who got all their visas stamped got prizes.

Another teaser for Philippine animé enthusiasts were the Ragnarok animé cartoon videos. Sadly, there weren't any English subtitles, but Level-Up plans to have some episodes air on local TV. Yay to that!

It would take a whole day to fully explore the COEX's many whimsical booths, but we were herded into this place for just one reason: watch Rebirth and Unholy in full Ragnarok glory.

One down, another to go

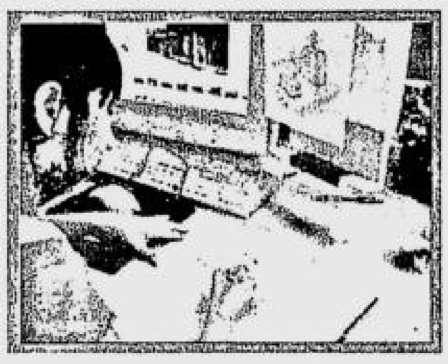
It's hard to follow a Guild War if you're not used to watching Player Versus Player (PVP) matches.

Here's the skinny on the competition. There were nine players in each team, and they were given 30 minutes to build each other's character (we're talking skills, items and status). Then it was off to the battle field for 10 minutes of glory-grabbing before heading to the semi-finals.

The first teams to battle were the Philippines' Rebirth and Indonesia's One Batz. Unfortunately, none of our cheerleading stints pulled off: Rebirth lost 9-3.

Rebirth's Christopher Chavez later pointed out that they couldn't see the traps that were laid out by the opponents. "Usually you see them on screen… this time we didn't. I guess it's a new feature of [the new update, Juno, which we don't have]."

The story of Rebirth's fall soon unraveled: Apparently, their wizard suddenly declared he was out of white potions, which led to his downfall. Next in line was the priest. With both healers dead, the team was going nowhere but down.



GRAPHIC designers actually go to different places in the world to check out various landscapes they could incorporate in Ragnarok's maps.

Which is quite sad, since their strategy could have insured the victory. All their characters had high vitality stats, and their strategy was brilliant: positioning the players to meet attacks by putting their defense at the front and their high-vitality offense at the back. They were also equipped with the best weapons: 8 Plankton cards that enabled their opponent to sleep once hit. The problem was, their offense panicked.

"It's also our fault, really," Chavez insists. "We're good players. We should have adapted to the [Juno patch], and we should have been more confident."

Unholy battle

The second Philippine team, Unholy, set out to make the country proud on the second day. Pitted against the Malaysian team Tengtitle, Unholy was cheered by Rebirth. Mark Reyes, a Guild Master and Game Play Expert for PRO, was convinced that the odds were in our favor.

"There's a great diversity in our players, since we have a richer environment of players. Malaysian players make up only half of our concurrent players. Plus, Unholy now knows how to win after watching Rebirth."

However, Mark's prophecy didn't come true. Just like Rebirth, Unholy's wizard was the first to go down. Tengtitle's hunters laid out traps on the entire floor, and wizards froze Unholy's players. Only two Unholy players remained on the map.

THUMBS up from Unholy's Ronaldo Dulay

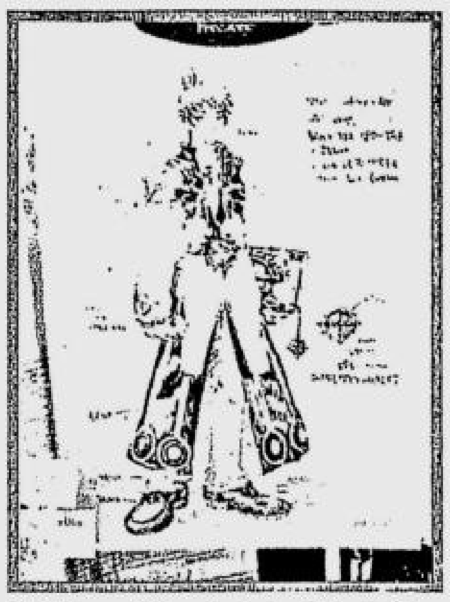
Ronaldo Dulay, who sported a Bunny head gear during the battle, confessed that they had "no practice." "We tried to adapt to what happened to Rebirth… we tried our best."

He also stressed that PRO's hunters were different from how hunters were used in the competition. "They're used as support here. Back home, we use them for agility and damage purposes."

As for strategy—they didn't have one planned. "We just said, 'whatever happens, happens.' We tried to adopt what Rebirth did."

The competition ended with both Taiwan teams taking first and second place, and both Malaysian teams taking third and fourth place.

FANCY a Deviruchi doll?



HOW your high priest should look like

Meeting the magic makers

Both Philippine teams might have sulked for a few minutes, but why would they feel bad when they were rocking it out in Korea? Chavez was upset at all the postings from players on the Philippine Ragnarok forums, but at least they tried their best.

Plus, who's to say their trip was in vain? Die-hard Ragnarok fans would gladly sell their mocking manteaus to witness Ragnarok fan-made films, take photo-ops with cosplay participants, and run after the giant Angelings.

And of course, there was the chance to rub elbows with Ragnarok creator, Myung Jing Lee.

On the third day of the trip, while the players and the Level-Up staff trotted down to the Lotte World (apparently the "biggest indoor amusement park in the world"), some of the press stopped by Gravity's offices to check out a demo of its newest game, R.O.S.E. (Rush on Seven Episodes), get a sneak peek at how the game was created, and meet with some of the game designers, who gladly shared with the media some of the updates on the new game. Here's a hint: you get to hit other players outside PVP, and pets will be able to use their powers to help you on your quests.

So the Philippine team might have lost and never got to complete their Ragnarok visas. But at least they saw sexy Sages and romped with the Angelings.

As Dulay said, "*Dahil sa* event *na 'to, pag-uwi namin, kahit anong* concerning RO, *wala nang makaka-top pa sa* experience *na 'to,*"

E-mail the author at mvreyes@inquirer.com.ph

Win Ragnarok goodie bags!

THOSE fabulous peeps at Level Up! Games sent us goodie bags to give away. To score one, just e-mail us three reasons why you love playing Ragnarok (include your character's job and the server that you play in) or why you would want to try it out at contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph, on or before Monday, Aug. 17.

411 on Ragnarok

RAGNAROK is a comic book created by Myung Jing Lee which chronicles the beginning of the end of the world: where the age of gods and monsters end and humans begin to take over. Ragnarok Online is a Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game (MMORPG), which means players log on the Internet to play the game with other, oh, say, 2,290,000 players (they don't call it "massive" for nothing).

So what's the big deal about Philippine Ragnarok Online (PRO)? If you ask a player, most probably he'll fumble over words like "items" and "monsters" and "quests" without really just blurting out that there really is no point in the game. You basically kill monsters for rare items and *zeny* (the currency in Ragnarok), which in turn you use to buy even more items. If you're familiar with RPGs, you probably know that you gain experience points for doing this.

Ragnarok is pretty much the same. You kill monsters to score higher experience points to add to your stats and gain job skills. And yes, that's pretty much it, save for random "quests" which require you to, well, kill more monsters.

But what makes players rush to the nearest Internet café with bloodshot eyes to get online has more to do than stabbing cute little furry bunny monsters. For one, Ragnarok gives you the choice of selecting what job you want: be it a swordsman, a thief, a merchant, a sage, an archer, or an acolyte.

Rockin' accessories

When you "level-up", that is, gain enough experience points, you turn into either a knight, an assassin, a blacksmith, a wizard, a hunter, or a priest (depending on what your first job was). Each job comes equipped with its own skills, and peculiar items.

And that is what makes Ragnarok so appealing: the items. They can range from important hi-tech weapons like elemental *katanas* and pikes, to absurd creations like "cake hats" and "smiley masks." In short, players in Ragnarok are not saved from society's love of fashion and accessories.

The desire to see how far a character can go also pushes players to keep loading up on credits. The mix of stats (vitality, agility, intelligence, etc.) can help characters excel in their "profession," and find out just how strong their skills can get.

Ragnarok is in its own a different culture altogether. Players meet, interact, and realize what "cooperation" means when they decide to form a party. They have their own language. They have their own world where they can escape to be a Level 69 Hybrid Knight equipped with a Wind Claymore before heading back to work in the real world.

If you want to see what all the hype is about and find out what "AMP! LAG!" means, log on to http://level-up-games.com for a free three-day Philippine Ragnarok Online trial. *Maui V. Reyes*

E-mail the author at mvreyes@inquirer.com.ph

PA-HEAL please? High priests and priestesses

THE ONLY Marionette present. Unfortunately, she didn't float.

KINKY.

A ROGUE, a swordsman, an acolyte and an archer backstage

So this is Cosplay!

Text and photos by
Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

Meet the people you want to invite to your next costume party

RAGNAROK'S answer to French maids: the ever-reliable Kafra Network

FANCY checking out Payon's Sohee and Munak?

IS THAT the right way to treat a lady? Alice gets a beating from a high priest.

THIS POSE looks oddly familiar…

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My top five beauty list

Lora Gahol

FIRST, it was John Cusack in "High Fidelity." Then we have David Letterman. Hollywood has even come up with its own version with the TV show, "Rank." Here, entire episodes are dedicated to one thing: lists.

There's something about that word, when used in the context of our currently trend-obsessed world, that acquires an intriguing spin—like being part of a "list" is a ticket to the illustrious circle. Being "enlisted," in this sense, turns something ubiquitous into something exclusive.

So this year, I'm making my own list before Santa joins the bandwagon. But never mind the hierarchy. I don't care about what's on top (or the bottom) of the billing. When it's on my list, it's on. Period.

These products have been tried, tried again, and tested. You decide if they make your own list.

5 products you need for your everyday 'kikay' kit

1) **Nivea Tinted Moisturizer.** They say that first love never dies. Unfortunately for hopeless romantics out there, it usually does. For honest-to-goodness makeup junkies, however, it's a different story. More often than not, the first item you truly fall in love with really could be the one.

In my case, Nivea Tinted Moisturizer didn't let me down. And after countless "flings" with similar prods, I always keep going back to this one. It looks like this love will last a lifetime.

2) **Mistine Lips and Cheeks Swim-proof Liquid Tint.** All you need for the freshest flush that looks so natural, you'd forget that the pink on your cheeks was "manufactured" somewhere in Asia. This has it all—the best shade, the gentlest formula (no breakouts!), the easiest-to-blend consistency, and a price to beat. Get your bottle before supplies run out!

3) **Shu Uemura Eyelash Curler.** I've tried it all. From metal curlers to heat-activated ones, nothing came close to the flirty curl and staying power this little gadget gives. Is it the high-tech, ergonomic design? I don't know. But I'm sure this one's the best.

4) **Nivea Lip Care and Gloss.** It's a lip treatment that gives just enough color and the perfect amount of shine to stop traffic—without causing road accidents, mind you.

5) **Shu Uemura Eye-correcting Pro Concealer.** I noticed that no matter how much I "fix" my face, it never seems right with the seemingly permanent dark half-moons under my eyes (my beauty curse!). With this miracle cover-up, I get a very sheer yet amazing disguise!

5 products that will keep your face healthy

1) **Pond's Lemon Cold Cream.** I've always thought of cold cream as painfully "old-school"—quite literally, as most of the people I know who use it are over 50. I changed my mind and became a true-blue fan when I realized that regular use of this product before washing (I don't rely on it for complete cleansing!) kept my skin supple and smooth even on the most stressful days.

2) **Dove Facial Foam.** Once, good friend and Seventeen magazine beauty editor Mariel Chua offered me a two-week road-test of a high-end cleanser. I passed up the deal, telling her that my skin was "cheap." Dove Facial Foam, which is the one foaming cleanser I can use for the rest of my life, costs less than a Venti Starbucks Frappuccino. Sure, I'd try out new stuff once in a while, but I've discovered that milder truly is better for some people, including myself.

3) **Cetaphil Moisturizing Cream.** By now, you know that my skin loves basic products best. I've come to learn that the ABCs of skincare still work. I've moved on to Cetaphil's moisturizer to keep the benefits of this derma-trusted brand on my skin. (I've been a fan of its cleanser since the day I first really washed my face with it.) It doesn't turn me into a greaseball, and has never triggered a flare-up. Never.

4) **Nivea Eye Cream.** When it comes to creams and face lotions, applying more than one at a time used to be overkill for me. I don't like layering emollients on my face, so, naturally, I made do without eye cream for quite some time.

Wrong move. Being more than blessed in the dark eye circles department, I badly needed the extra care. So I decided to start using eye cream, regardless of the fact that I was under 25. This one by Nivea has been a miracle worker so far. I'm still a half-raccoon on some days, but I have been looking more bright-eyed since I started this regimen.

5) **Totally Juicy Grapefruit Peel-Off Mask.** I absolutely love peel-off masks! This one is on my list for the simple fact that my face really brightens after I use it, and the fruity goodness seems to really stay on my skin.

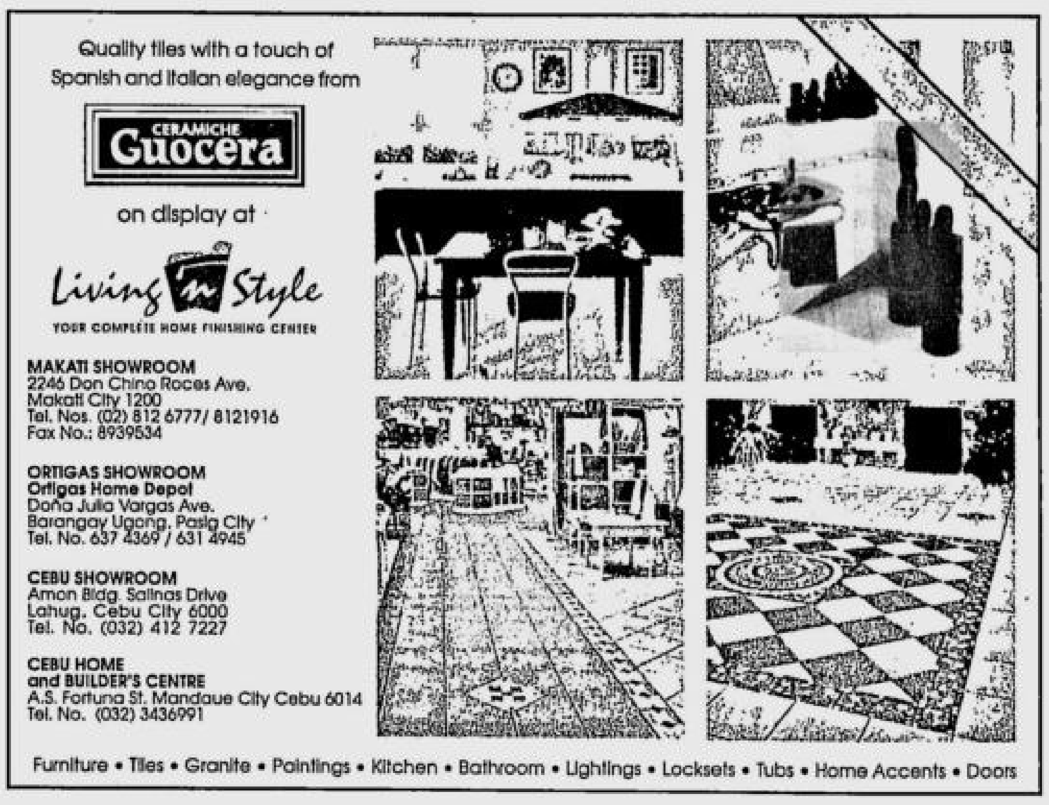
I use it once a week, sometimes twice, especially since I've laid off using abrasive exfoliants for the time being ("Keep it gentle" is my current beauty mantra) and need the dead-skin-lifting boost.

I have more lists to make for the next couple of weeks. Send me your suggestions! What line-up of products would you like to see on my list?

E-mail the author at pdi_vanityfare@hotmail.com or lora_gahol@yahoo.com

All products available at PCX except for Shu Uemura, at Rustan's Makati and Shangri-La Plaza, and Mistine at Mimi Cosmetics, Independent Lifestyles Wing, Rockwell Power Plant Mall.

These products have been tried, tried again, and tested. You decide if they make your own list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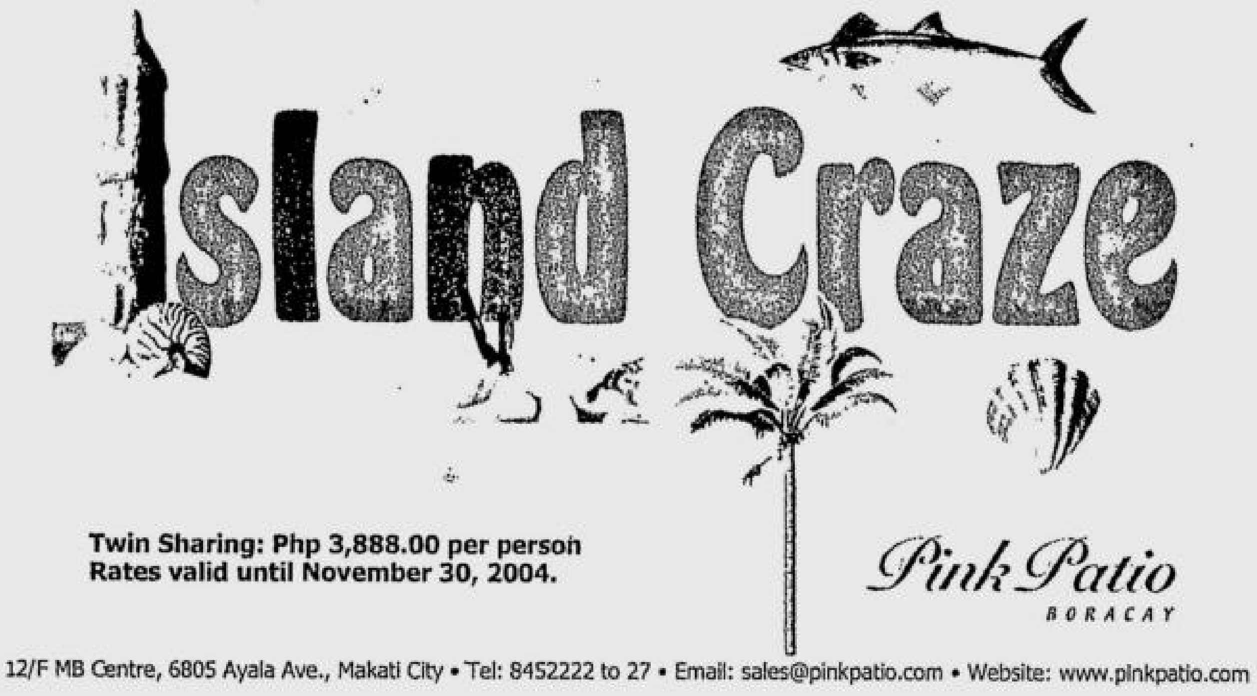

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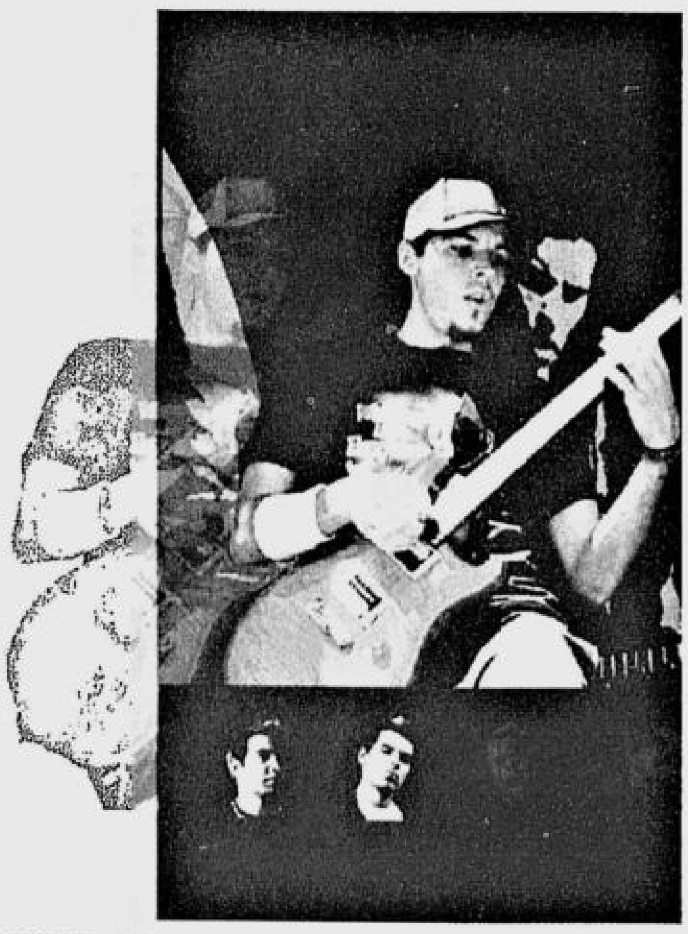

A SAMPLE of TJ's artistry

We have a winner!

CONGRATULATIONS to Antonio Jose "TJ" Cadiz of Laguna!

He'll be watching Hoobastank for free at the Folk Arts Theater on Tuesday, Aug. 17, thanks to the killer flash creation that he submitted to us.

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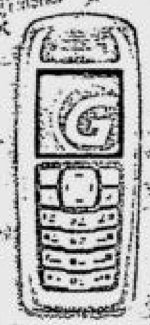

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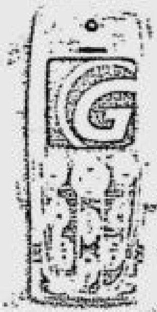

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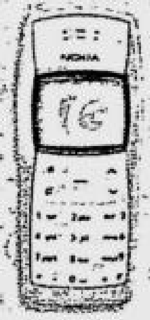
- GPRS-capable
- 40 Polyphonic Tones



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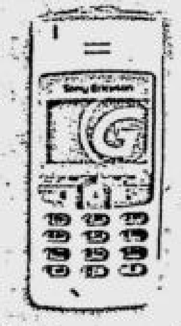

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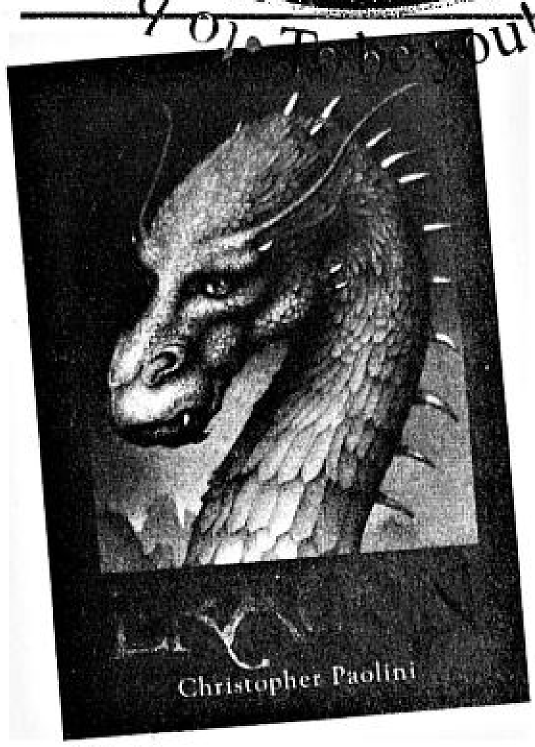
Young fantasy comes true

Home-schooled kid Christopher Paolini began writing 'Eragon,' the first tome in his magic-and-maces Inheritance trilogy, when he was 15



"Eragon: Inheritance Book One"
By Christopher Paolini
Alfred A. Knopf, New York
2003, 509 pp.

By Ruel S. De Vera

REVIEW

IT IS the stuff of teen fantasy: Young man begins an extraordinary journey that helps him fulfill his immense promise and finds his destiny on an unimaginable scale. The amazing thing is that this is the premise both in and behind the book "Eragon."

A lot has been written about "Eragon's" author prodigy—and it is a tale worth telling. Home-schooled smart kid Christopher Paolini, weaned on science fiction and fantasy, conceives a sprawling fantasy epic full of dragons and wizards at 15.

He decides to actually begin writing the epic and, with the aid of friends and relatives, self-publishes "Eragon," the first book in what Paolini has ambitiously called the "Inheritance Trilogy." The big-time publishing firm Alfred A. Knopf takes a shine to the little book, acquires up the rights not only to "Eragon," but to the forthcoming sequels as well. Abrakadabra. Paolini is an international best-selling author at 19.

While it is notable that "Eragon" was written by someone so young and under such unique circumstances, it has to be said that the book itself is good but not necessarily great reading—though the parallels to Paolini's own story are fascinating.

Dark times have fallen on the Kingdom of Alagaësia. The dangerous King Galbatorix rules with a mighty and merciless hand. The poor peasant boy Eragon discovers a mysterious gem in the treacherous Spine mountains—and discovers it isn't a gem at all, but a dragon egg.

Eragon remembers tales of the heroic Dragon Riders who rode the winds over Alagaësia, before they were betrayed by Galbatorix.

Bonding with dragons

Once the dragon hatches, a bond is formed between the boy and the hatchling, which is soon named Saphira. But evil forces are on the move, destroying much of what the boy holds dear.

Fleeing the tiny village of Carvahall with Saphira and the enigmatic storyteller Brom, Eragon seeks revenge for the death of his uncle but finds more questions than answers.

As he makes his way across the Kingdom, Eragon encounters everything from a were-cat to a fearsome Shade that is shadowing him. Along the way, he discovers that he has been named after one of the greatest Dragon Riders ever—a stunning coincidence, considering he is now the newest Dragon Rider, and Galbatorix will stop at nothing to capture him and Saphira.

Hooking up with the stoic wanderer Murtagh, Eragon grows in power as Brom teaches him to unlock his magical gifts even as he is schooled in the art of war.

Fevered dreams of a beautiful elf leads him to rescue Arya from the clutches of the enemy and the companions make a brave dash for the Varden, the rebels who oppose the despotic Galbatorix.

Paolini's prose is a mixed blessing. Its simplicity makes it very accessible even to the youngest readers, yet it is also often overly simplistic and lacking in detail or texture.

"Eragon's" plot (and most likely, the plot of the Inheritance saga itself) is very derivative, with many different influences, but the most obvious ones are J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy (Shades, Urgals and Galbatorix, oh my) and Anne McCaffrey's "Pern" books.

Paolini clearly has a very ambitious plot in mind as his final gambit in "Eragon," the siege at Farthen Dûr, clearly displays.

While the story itself isn't exactly groundbreaking, Paolini did what Tolkien did at the beginning. He has crafted an entire world, com-

YOUNG/ D4

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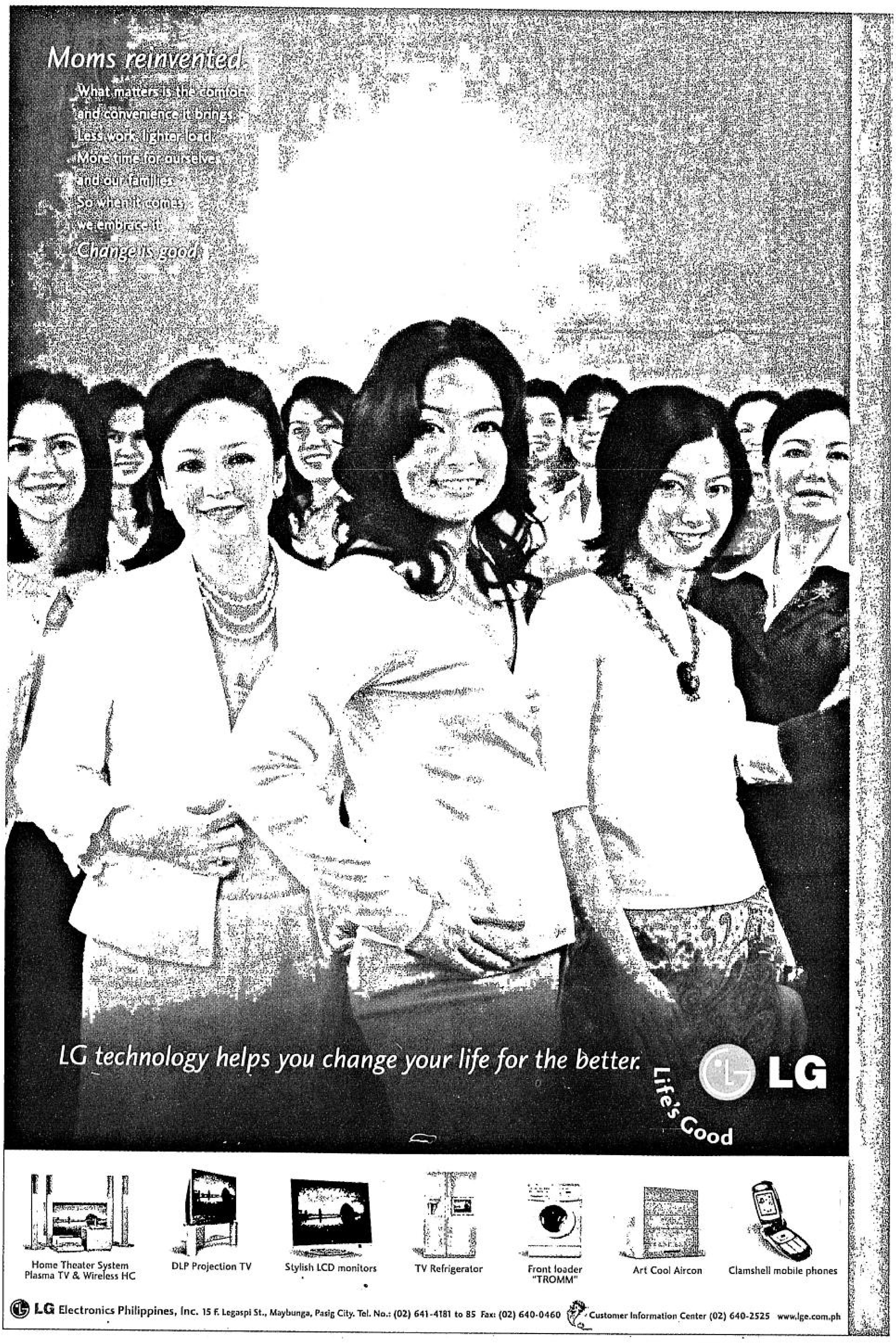

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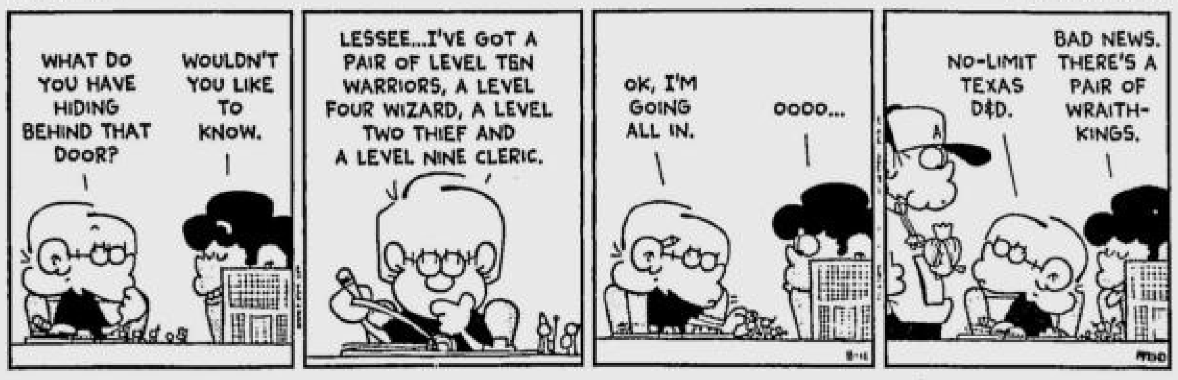
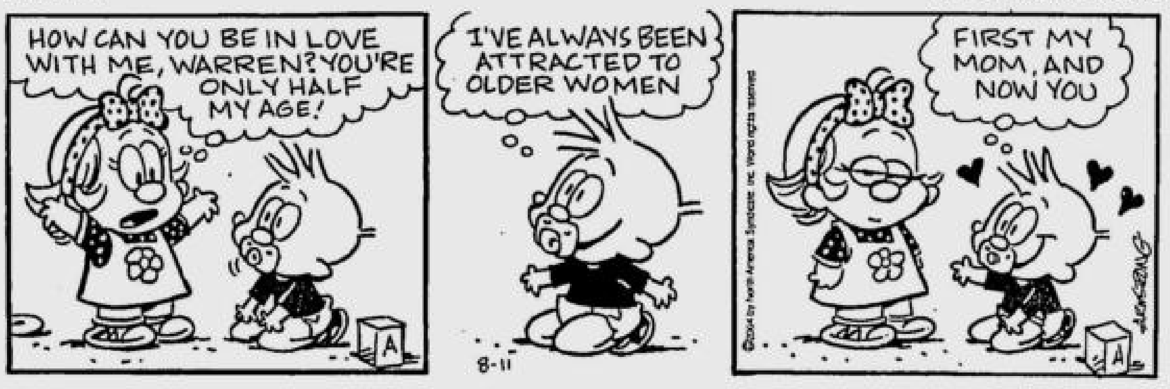
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WHAT DO YOU HAVE HIDING BEHIND THAT DOOR?
WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO KNOW.
LESSEE...I'VE GOT A PAIR OF LEVEL TEN WARRIORS, A LEVEL FOUR WIZARD, A LEVEL TWO THIEF AND A LEVEL NINE CLERIC.
OK, I'M GOING ALL IN.
OOOO...
NO-LIMIT TEXAS D&D.
BAD NEWS. THERE'S A PAIR OF WRAITH-KINGS.
8-11

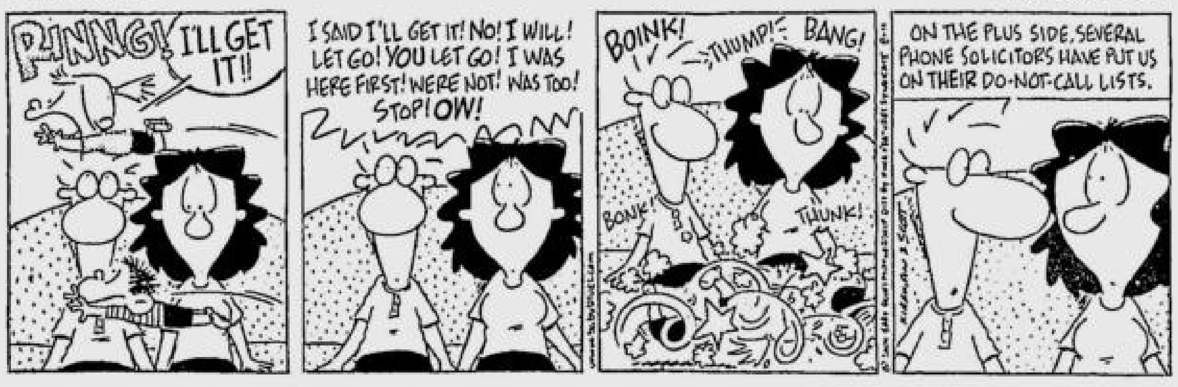
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


HOW CAN YOU BE IN LOVE WITH ME, WARREN? YOU'RE ONLY HALF MY AGE!
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN ATTRACTED TO OLDER WOMEN
FIRST MY MOM, AND NOW YOU
8-11
ARMSTRONG

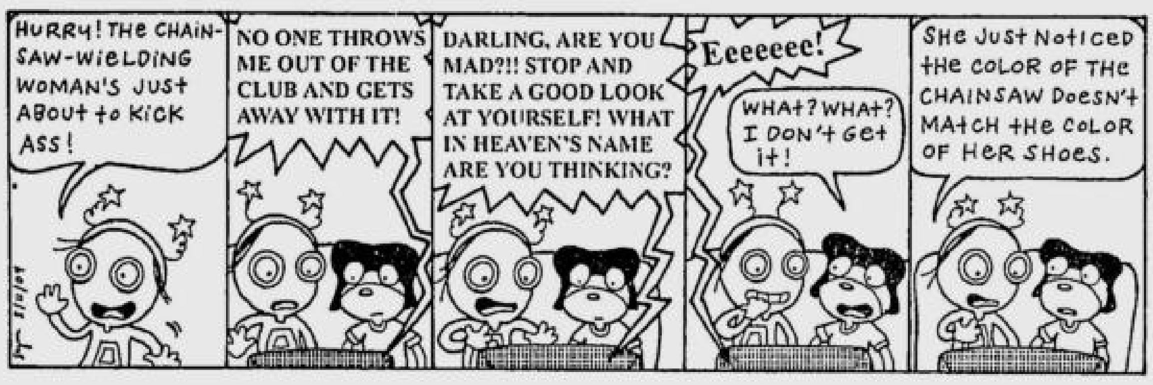
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


RINNG!
I'LL GET IT!!
I SAID I'LL GET IT! NO! I WILL! LET GO! YOU LET GO! I WAS HERE FIRST! WERE NOT! WAS TOO! STOP! OW!
BOINK!
THUMP!
BANG!
BONK!
THUNK!
ON THE PLUS SIDE, SEVERAL PHONE SOLICITORS HAVE PUT US ON THEIR DO-NOT-CALL LISTS.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HURRY! THE CHAIN-SAW-WIELDING WOMAN'S JUST ABOUT TO KICK ASS!
NO ONE THROWS ME OUT OF THE CLUB AND GETS AWAY WITH IT!
DARLING, ARE YOU MAD?!! STOP AND TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT YOURSELF! WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME ARE YOU THINKING?
Eeeeeee!
WHAT? WHAT? I DON'T GET IT!
SHE JUST NOTICED THE COLOR OF THE CHAINSAW DOESN'T MATCH THE COLOR OF HER SHOES.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: Without question, you have power and insight. You also have a strong desire to get at and reveal the truth. You understand people. You cannot be duped. You enjoy having an audience that appreciates your talents. You don't like hypocrisy. In the year ahead, you'll have more solitude in order to learn something valuable.

Birthdate of: Jerry Falwell, evangelist; Alex Haley, writer; Steve Wozniak, computer designer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You can make a great impression on romantic interests today. Something about you seems to have a magnetic quality. You've got others in the palm of your hand

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're very strong in your discussions with parents today. You can also figure out how to make improvements and repairs at home, especially to plumbing and bathrooms.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're extremely persuasive with others today. No one can resist you! You can sell, market, influence and teach anyone practically anything.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Trust your moneymaking ideas today. You're not afraid to think big. You also see new applications for old methods or old materials. These bright ideas could earn you money!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You really want to get things done today. Whatever you do, you'll learn something, and gain more knowledge about yourself in the process. You might do something that changes your appearance.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Something will trigger some serious self-scrutiny today. You have the ability to examine yourself and see some secrets about yourself that you've chosen to ignore.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): A friend can give you excellent ideas about how to improve your appearance or how to improve how you do something. Listen to this advice. It can help you now!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): People are willing to listen to you today. You're powerful, confident and ready to take command. You want to tell someone in charge how to improve things. (Great! Do it.)

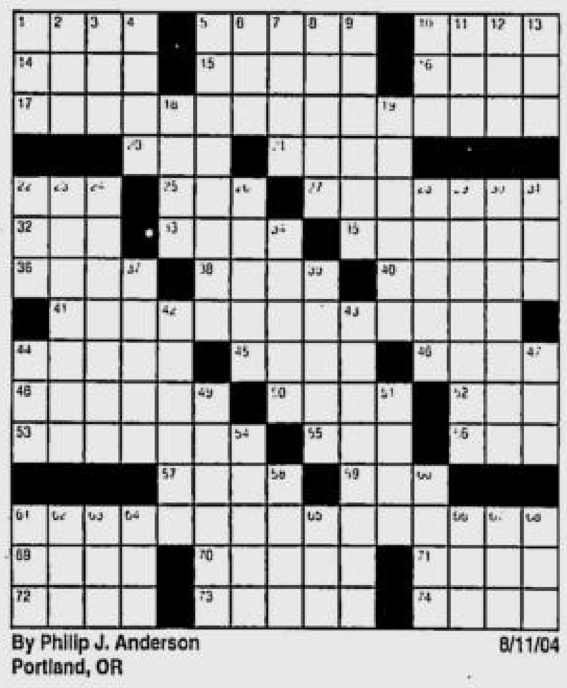
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): New philosophical or religious ideas occur to you today. Suddenly, you see something with a completely new slant. You are probably closer to a meaningful truth that is important.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Don't be afraid to use the resources or possessions of others to get what you want. You need some help to fulfill your objectives. Be open to offers that come your way.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Discussions with others generate exciting new ideas about how to improve something. You might see a better way of dealing with customers and the general public.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): It's easy to do repairs or fix something broken at work today. Don't let others hold you back. Your impulse to improve something is correct; therefore, don't be afraid to act.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

8/11/04

ACROSS
1 Eager
5 Rain on a winter parade
10 Lambs' moms
14 Bonet or Alther
15 British PM (1970-74)
16 Folk wisdom
17 Desperate canal builder's program?
20 Avant-garde French sculptor
21 Present!
22 Battery size
25 Profound dread
27 Vomits
32 Social ties
33 NYC cultural attraction
35 Temptresses
36 Feminine's opp.
38 Death rattle
40 Suffice
41 Pharaoh's program?
44 Blood part
45 Strip of wood
46 Kind of pickle
48 Basketry willows
50 Medieval peon
52 Besides
53 Stopping place
55 Check out
56 Secret agent
57 Connections
59 Bering or Ross
61 Thurgood s European program?
69 Ring of light
70 Day's march
71 Classify
72 "Lohengrin" lady
73 Ridge formed by a glacier
74 Use acid for art

DOWN
1 Completely
2 Routing word
3 NASA orbiter
4 Computer input
5 Boring mollusk
6 Do-over service
7 For one
8 Old anesthetic
9 "__ a Girl in My Soup"
10 Hobbit ally
11 Pursue with passion
12 Mistype
13 Fixed in place
18 Scotch shot
19 Magical object
22 Objective
23 Metrical foot
24 Ancient empire on the Tigris
26 Online letters
28 Nicene __
29 Recluses
30 Surround
31 Vane dir.
34 Robert and Alan
37 Salad-service piece
39 First name in cosmetics
42 Ambrosia of immortality
43 Art deco skyscraper building
44 Distress letters
47 Actress Myrna
49 Evening affair
51 Sense
54 Avian residences
58 Bard of Avon: abbr.
60 Church area
61 Common article
62 Actor Linden
63 Aerial RRs
64 Extinct bird
65 Galoot
66 Parking area
67 Line made with a compass
68 Ultimate

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

G	O	O	■	W	I	P	E	R	■	C	A	B	A	L
A	M	P	■	O	S	A	K	A	■	O	S	A	G	E
S	E	T	■	K	A	T	E	J	A	C	K	S	O	N
C	A	F	E	■	B	E	D	■	G	O	E	S	■	■
A	R	O	U	S	E	S	■	D	R	A	W	I	N	G
P	A	R	C	E	L	■	B	R	A	■	■	N	E	Y
■	■	■	H	A	L	S	E	Y	■	S	T	E	A	M
■	F	A	R	R	A	H	F	A	W	C	E	T	T	■
T	A	L	E	S	■	M	O	D	E	R	N	■	■	■
I	L	L	■	■	B	O	G	■	B	A	N	A	N	A
M	A	E	S	T	R	O	■	A	S	P	I	R	I	N
■	■	Y	O	R	E	■	S	K	I	■	S	C	A	G
J	A	C	L	Y	N	S	M	I	T	H	■	A	C	E
E	R	A	T	O	■	H	E	R	E	S	■	N	I	L
B	A	T	I	N	■	Y	E	A	S	T	■	E	N	S

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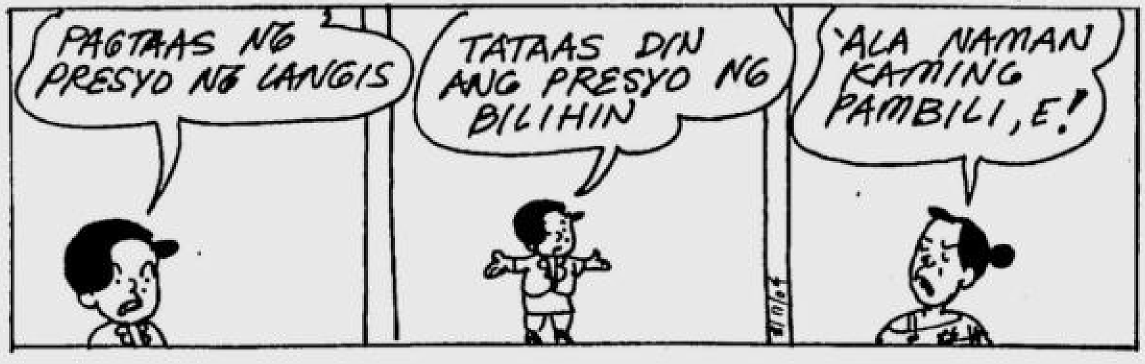
8/11/04

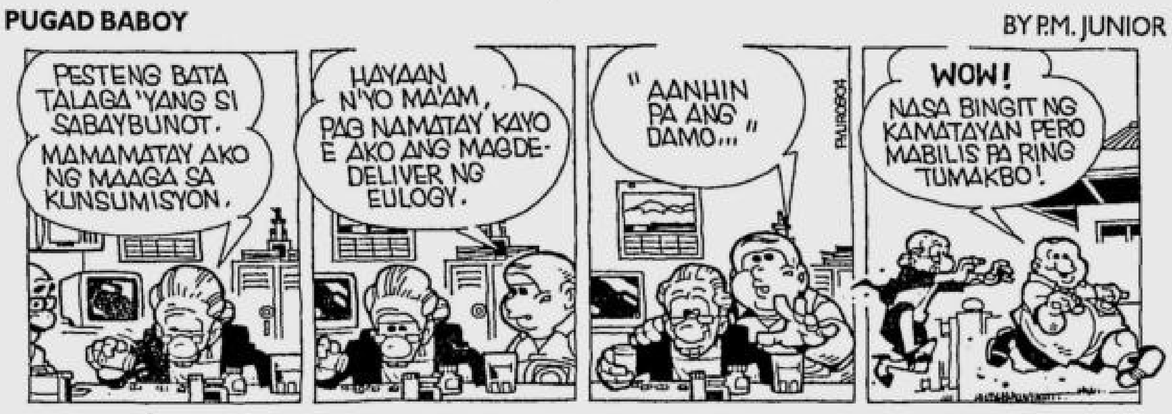
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PAGTAAS NG PRESYO NG LANGIS
TATAAS DIN ANG PRESYO NG BILIHIN
'ALA NAMAN KAMING PAMBILI, E!

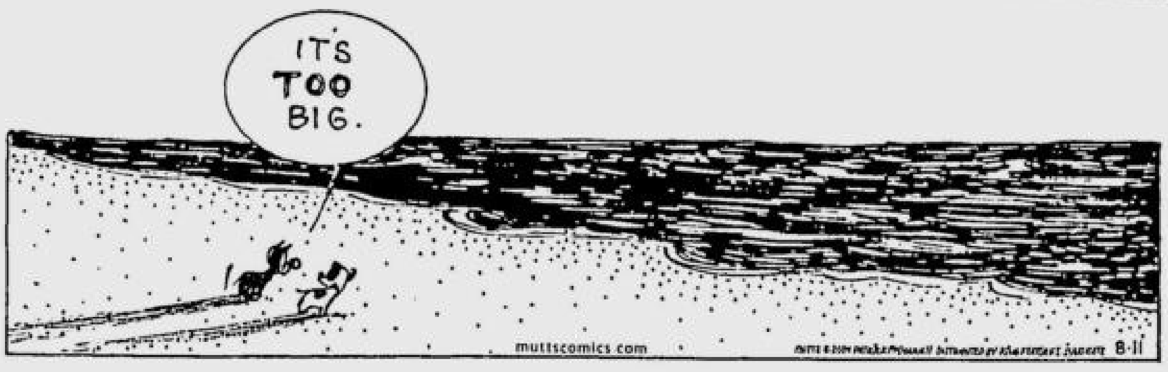
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PESTENG BATA TALAGA 'YANG SI SABAYBUNOT.
MAMAMATAY AKO NG MAAGA SA KUNSUMISYON.
HAYAAN N'YO MA'AM, PAG NAMATAY KAYO E AKO ANG MAGDE-DELIVER NG EULOGY.
"AANHIN PA ANG DAMO..."
WOW! NASA BINGIT NG KAMATAYAN PERO MABILIS PA RING TUMAKBO!

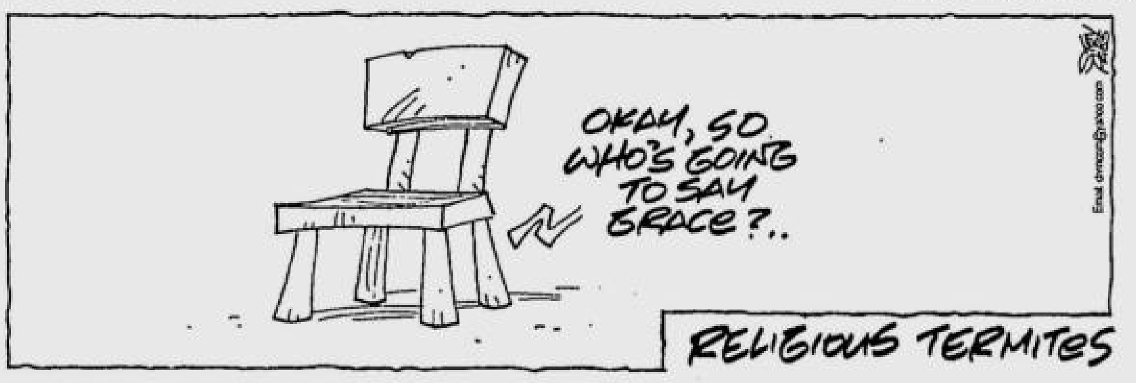
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


IT'S TOO BIG.
muttscomics.com
8-11

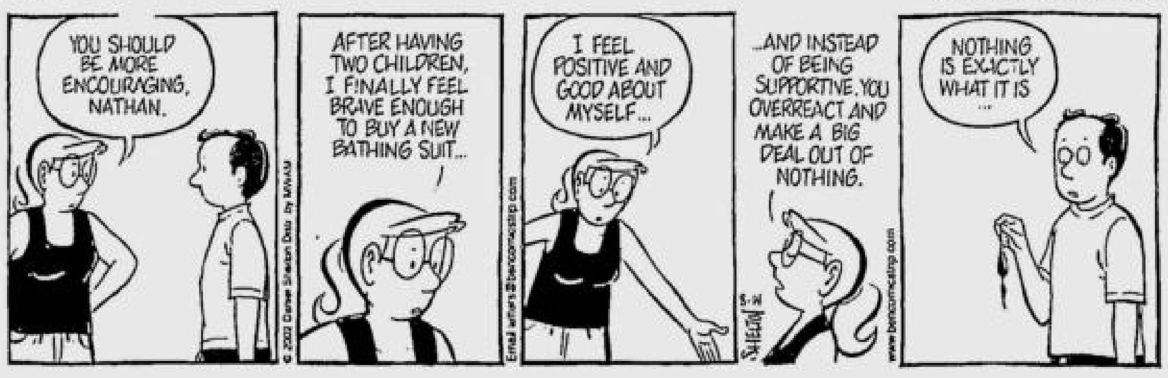
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


OKAY, SO WHO'S GOING TO SAY GRACE?..
RELIGIOUS TERMITES

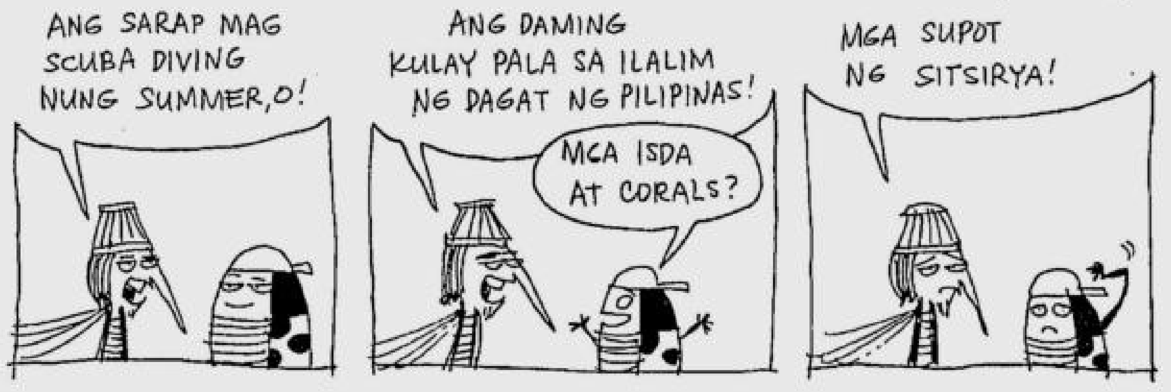
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


YOU SHOULD BE MORE ENCOURAGING, NATHAN.
AFTER HAVING TWO CHILDREN, I FINALLY FEEL BRAVE ENOUGH TO BUY A NEW BATHING SUIT...
I FEEL POSITIVE AND GOOD ABOUT MYSELF...
...AND INSTEAD OF BEING SUPPORTIVE, YOU OVERREACT AND MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF NOTHING.
NOTHING IS EXACTLY WHAT IT IS ...

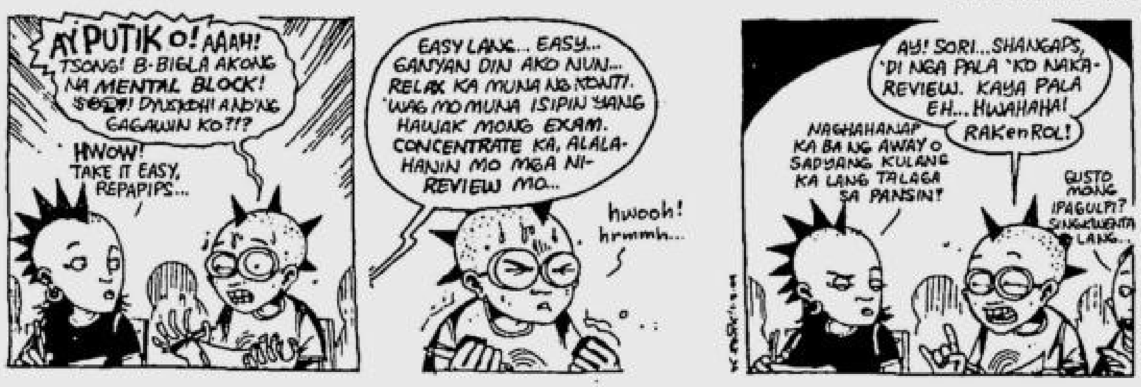
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG SARAP MAG SCUBA DIVING NUNG SUMMER, O!
ANG DAMING KULAY PALA SA ILALIM NG DAGAT NG PILIPINAS!
MGA ISDA AT CORALS?
MGA SUPOT NG SITSIRYA!

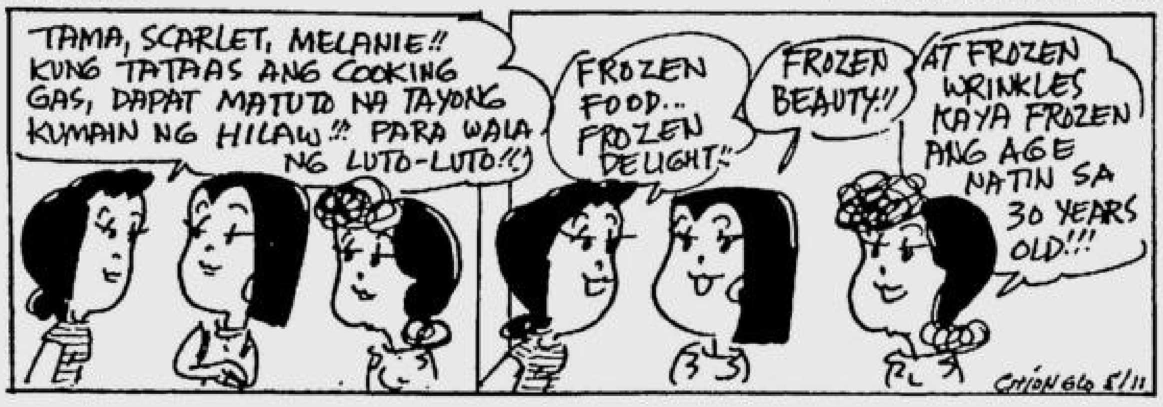
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


AY PUTIK O! AAAH! TSONG! B-BIGLA AKONG NA MENTAL BLOCK! [illegible]! DYUSKOH! ANO'NG GAGAWIN KO?!?
HWOW! TAKE IT EASY, REPAPIPS...
EASY LANG... EASY... GANYAN DIN AKO NUN... RELAX KA MUNA NG KONTI. 'WAG MO MUNA ISIPIN YANG HAWAK MONG EXAM. CONCENTRATE KA, ALALAHANIN MO MGA NI-REVIEW MO...
hwooh! hrmmh...
NAGHAHANAP KA BA NG AWAY O SADYANG KULANG KA LANG TALAGA SA PANSIN?
AY! SORI... SHANGAPS, 'DI NGA PALA 'KO NAKA-REVIEW. KAYA PALA EH... HWAHAHA! RAKenROL!
GUSTO MONG IPAGULPI? SINGKWENTA LANG...

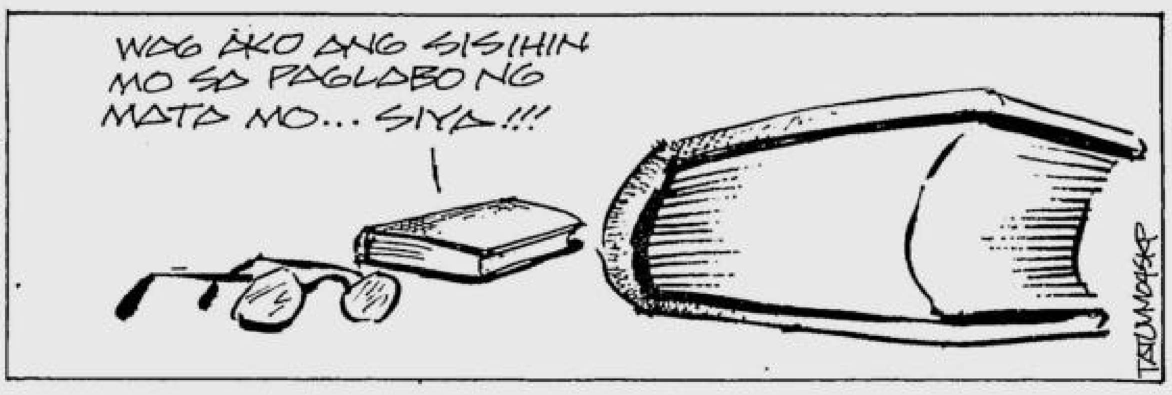
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


TAMA, SCARLET, MELANIE!! KUNG TATAAS ANG COOKING GAS, DAPAT MATUTO NA TAYONG KUMAIN NG HILAW!! PARA WALA NG LUTO-LUTO!!
FROZEN FOOD... FROZEN DELIGHT!
FROZEN BEAUTY!!
AT FROZEN WRINKLES KAYA FROZEN ANG AGE NATIN SA 30 YEARS OLD!!!
CHIONGLO 8/11

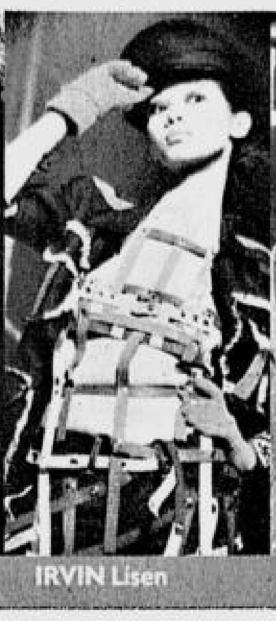
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


WAG AKO ANG SISIHIN MO SA PAGLABO NG MATA MO... SIYA!!!
TATUM

DINO Lloren

BRIAN Aloquin



IRVIN Lisen

PEEWEE Senining

JP Abinuman

PROTACIO

RONALD Enrico

CARY Santiago

ISA Olondriz

OLIVIA [illegible]

A city of queens

There are no princesses in Cebu, only queens. And like all queens, they can surely bust balls. Ouch!

Tim Yap

CEBU CITY—I am writing this in the middle of choosing the next "Supahstar"—MTV's newest supah (slang for "Super!", my favorite word) search for the next pop sensation. Sensation being the right word, as every moment being exposed to young talent is an exhilarating experience that is both an oral and aural treat.

Right in the center of SM Megamall in Cebu City, more than a hundred hopefuls fall in line, sing a few notes, play a few tricks and hear what we, the casting directors (along with singing diva **Radha** and rap star **Andrew E.**) have to say about their performance.

Some belt out high notes like **Regine Velasquez** and **Sarah Geronimo**, others rap and freestyle a la Andrew E. and Salbakuta. Whatever they do, one thing is for sure—there is an overflow of talent in this side of the world. (Other Supahstar spots include Davao, Baguio and Manila—so watch out for the Supahstar sightings and go and audition!)

With a final 30 that we have to narrow down to 10 finalists (who will compete against the other finalists from the abovementioned cities), I must admit that it is quite hard making a decision, as I am getting quite attached to them. I must channel my inner Simon Cowell and be truthful (but not mean) and choose the best among the crop.

Or I can call out my inner **Tim Tayag** (my half brother—'Tim and Timmer'—who hosts the show along with VJ Longlegs a.k.a. the scintillating **Sarah Meier**) and just find the good-sense humor in each situation and be able to milk it.

These past three weeks that I've been jetting to Cebu (attending and hosting parties, taping episodes of Supahstar and spearheading a Smart Addict campaign) have made me realize one thing—that Cebu is not the "Queen City of the South," as it is popularly known. It is, however, a city of queens.

There are no princesses (unlike in Manila) here—only queens. And like all queens, they can surely bust balls. Ouch!

Denim Ball dazzlers

Speaking of balls, last month's Levi's Denim Ball brought out Cebu's finest in their finest. Hip, young Cebuanos went all out, as they always do. Here, nothing is half-baked. Everything is hot, hot, hot!

Theirs is a heat that melts the asphalt of the earth. These people are used to the heat—they revel in it.

Cebuanos exude a different kind of brightness because they have the sun as their core. They are used to working long and hard. How apt that at least for this ball, they chose denim—the working man's fabric—as their leitmotif. The Cebuanos understand anything and everything long and hard. Fabric, I mean.

So that night, the C-list fashion A-set all came out to party—to toast the arrival of Style File—the newest show on their very own Cebu Channel 28. It's hosted by pretty and sassy **Jaja Chiongbian** and produced by Cebuano mover **Mario Colmenares**. This guy actually deserves an award for his efforts to push hip, young Cebu to the forefront.

Champagne flowed as the man behind the station, visionary **Jay Aldeguer** (who is also the brains behind Island Souvenirs, among many other hip and hot ventures—girls, grab him!), fashion-forward Manila-based Cebuana designer **Kate Torralba** (who exclaimed in excitement, "*Que guwapa, guwapo nyo lahat!*" or something like that), Cebuana society doyenne **Amparito Lhuillier** and Manila society icon, my Sea Princess **Tessa Prieto-Valdes** (who forever raves about Cebu designers), all led the style files and partyphiles at the Waterfront Hotel for this one-of-a-kind southern celebration.

New supahstar

The party also had a fashion show featuring young designers who rendered denim interpretations through the decades. A surefire standout was this new guy whose mastery of fabric and construction was very apparent. His designs appear cutting-edge, avant-garde, but his shapes are very contemporary—and at least for me, very wearable.

He also won the Cebu Young Designer of the Year award. Mark my words, he will make it—you should watch out for this guy. His name is **Andre Chang**, and you read it here first!

Anyway, at the party front, I looked around and saw hot hipsters too many to mention. They were in dazzlingly deconstructed and playfully embellished denim pieces—guys, girls and everyone else in between. It was a fashion-festive eye candy parade that I hadn't seen in Manila for quite some time.

In many ways, my Cebu experience is comparable to drinking Bo's Coffee (the Starbucks of the South. Speaking of Starbucks, you must try their strawberries and cream frappuccino—just thinking of it makes me wet).

The Cebuanos are never saccharine. But somehow, you always crave for more of them. They are not sentimental at all. They have a drive to get things done. The closest people that come to mind are Singaporeans. Yes, Cebuanos are like laid-back Singaporeans (is there such a thing?).

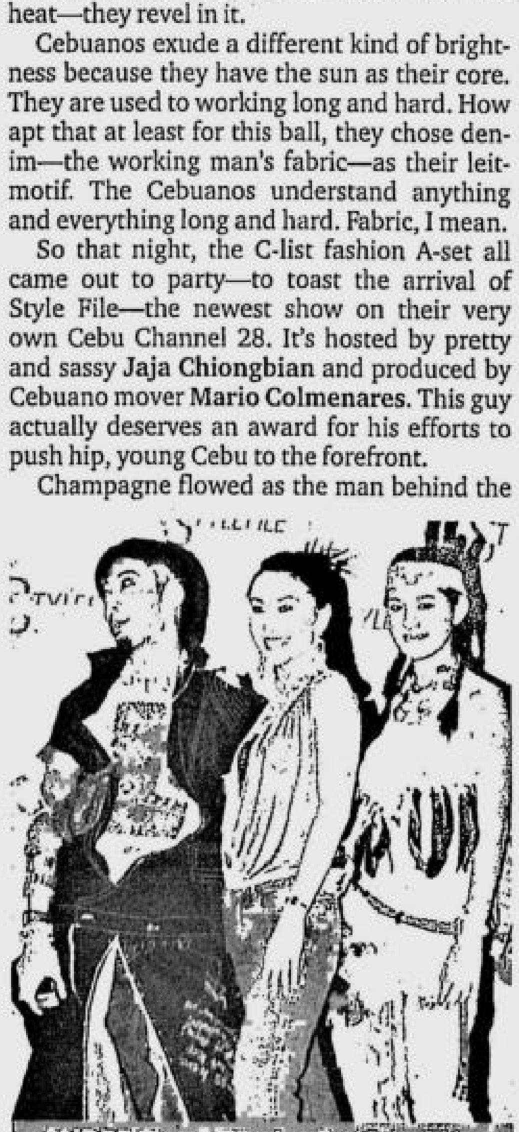
While people-watching at Ayala Center and reading my Zee Quarterly, I realized that another thing we can learn from our Cebuano siblings is to have a sense of "pride of place." Every Cebuano is proud to be a Cebuano—and rightly so.

Having that, and knowing the value of hard work and discipline, we can all be "supahstars!"

CEBU TV Channel 28 "On The Edge" hosts Nonoy and Amalie Jopson

JENNIFER Rodriguez and Style File segment host Carissa Garcia

EDWIN [illegible]



ANDRE Chang, Charlen Go (Cebu TV Channel 28 "In The Mix" VJ) and Style File segment host Nikki Taylor

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
News that makes a difference in the environment

Power girls

Avon's Teen Advisory Council is composed of vibrant young ladies who know who they are, what they want and how to get them

By Pam Pastor

FOR THREE years now, Avon has been holding an annual search for exceptional teenage girls who would become members of its Teen Advisory Council.

This year's TAC is composed of vibrant girls who know who they are, what they want and how to get them.

The girls, who were chosen from some of the best high schools in Metro Manila, will become Avon's official teen voice. They will undergo training programs and personality development sessions and will receive product samples and cash allowances.

In the desire to bring social awareness to other teenagers, the Teen Advisory Council will present activities to encourage young people to get involved in important issues. One example is their plan to raise funds for the PGH Breast Care Center, in support of Avon's commitment to the breast cancer cause.

What they have achieved and will achieve as individuals and as a group gives younger girls more than enough reason to look up to them as role models.

Say hello to them.

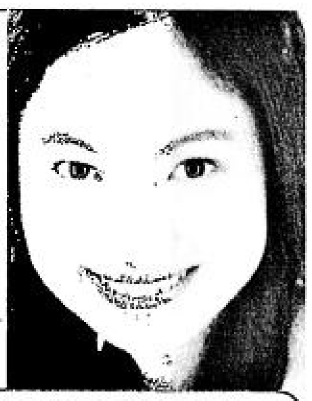
Karylle Abigail De Leon Adao

Nickname: Aby
Age: 16
School: Saint Mary's College
Passion: Music
The 411: She's the external vice president of her student council, she's an honor student and has represented her school in several youth fora

Fast forward: She wants to become a lawyer or a doctor someday.

Alodia Almira Gosiengfiao

Nickname: Edjie; Edj
Age: 16
School: Miriam College High School
Passion: The arts—drawing, dancing and singing
The 411: Edjie regularly joins art contests and has won several awards



Carla Nicole Sia

Nickname: Carla
Age: 15
School: Miriam College High School
Passion: Fencing
The 411: She is active in fencing, taekwondo, she plays the piano, is a member of the debate team, teaches at church, is part of the student council and is an honor student

Catherine Mirasol

Nickname: Cathy
Age: 15
School: St. Scholastica's College, Manila
Passion: cheerdancing
The 411: She is a cheerdancer, is an active outreach representative of her school and is a member of the theater arts program

Justine Kayne Cordero

Nickname: Juz
Age: 14
School: Elizabeth Seton School
Passion: The performing arts
The 411: She is part of the dramatics club, she sings and dances, draws, and is a member of her school's volleyball varsity team

Fast forward: She wants to set up a fashion-related business

Angelica Bella B. Misa

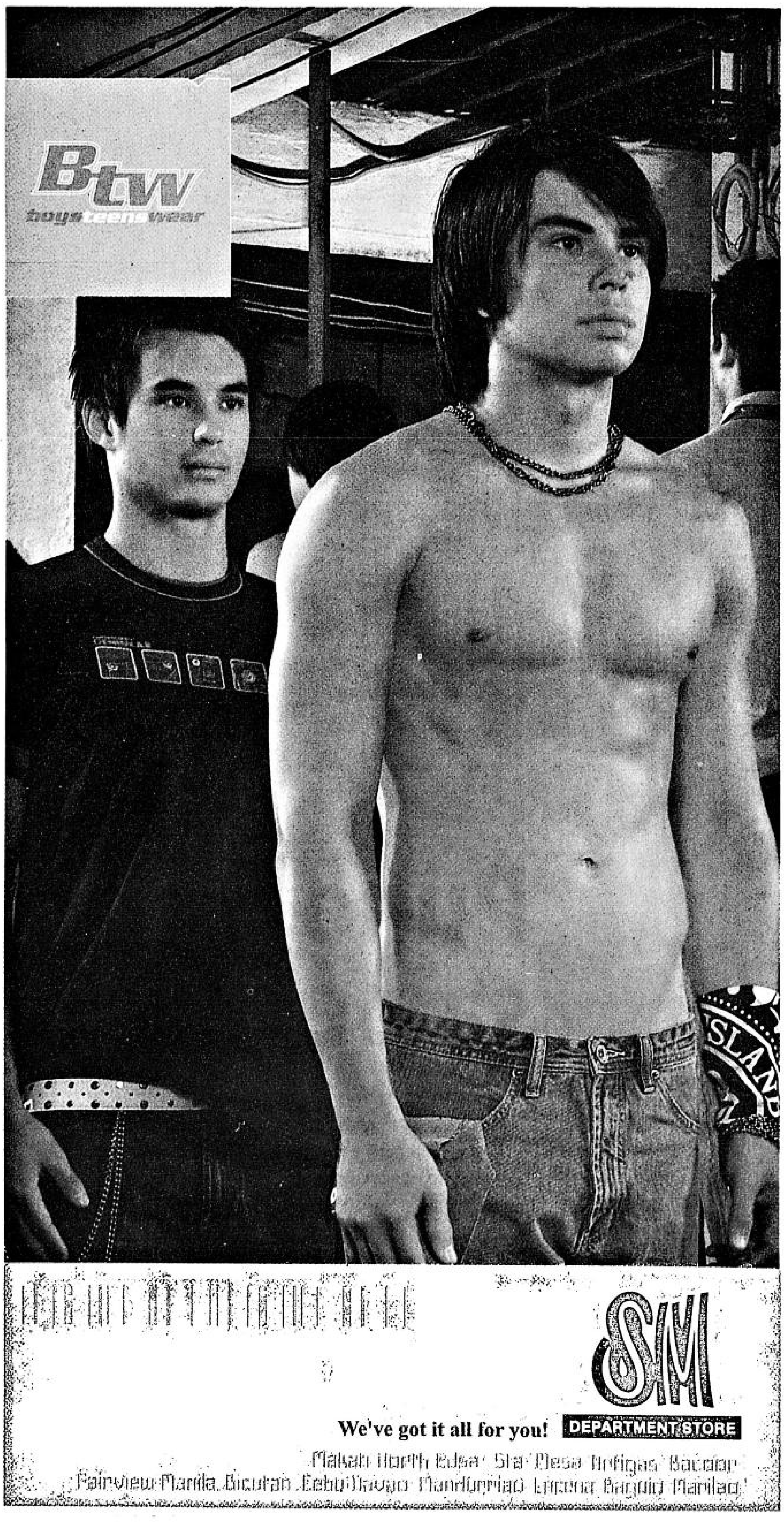
Nickname: Kylie, Kye, Kylita
Age: 14
School: St. Scholastica's College
Passion: Soccer
The 411: She's active in soccer and taekwondo, is an honor student and is class president

Mary Anne P. Alabanza

Nickname: Mae, Maan
Age: 16
School: Colegio de San Agustin
Passion: Gymnastics
The 411: She is a gymnast, a cheerleader, a debater, a student council officer and a Student Teachers Program trainor. She also designs and sews her own bags

Marianne Grace Zshomack Araneta

Nickname: Rina
Age: 16
School: St. Scholastica's College, Manila
Passion: Writing
The 411: She is a budding writer, a bibliophile, is student council vice president and is active in her school's outreach program



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Young fantasy . . .

From page D1

plete with culture, maps and languages; indeed, in many ways, it is the promise of exploring the rich landscape and history of Alagaësia that will entice some readers.

Amiable protagonist

In many ways, "Eragon" is almost all introduction—people, places and powers—which readers will obviously have to find out more about in the next books.

Wisely, Paolini has created a protagonist whom many of the readers will be able to identify with, as Eragon is himself growing from boyhood to manhood and yet also solving the mysteries of his past and perhaps, future. This makes Eragon a most amiable, if somewhat simplistic protagonist, but he remains a character readers will find most sympathetic.

"Eragon" will feel like much-trodden territory to dyed-in-the-wool fantasy fans, but for younger readers and those new to this genre, the book offers a very reader-friendly if ultimately derivative entrance to an entirely new adventure.

As for the now 20-year-old Christopher Paolini, he faces the challenge of conjuring up a second (the forthcoming "Eldest") and third volumes that will fulfill the promise of the fantasy hatchling that is "Eragon."

Available at National Bookstore and PowerBooks.